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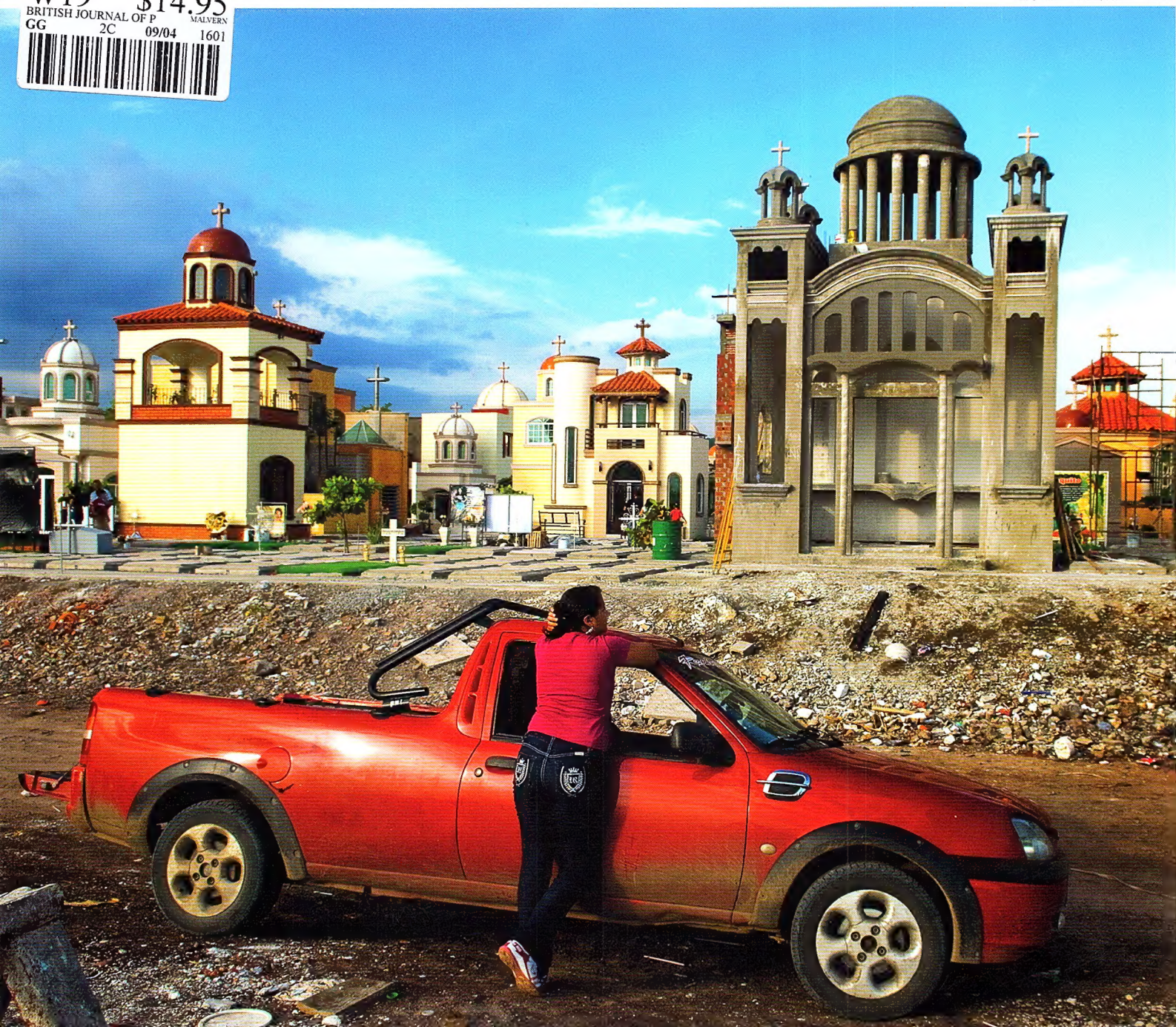
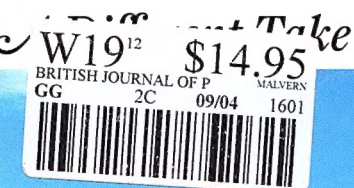


IMAGE © SHAUL SCHWARZ/REPORTAGE BY GETTY IMAGES

## STORYVILLE

TALES FROM THE FRONTLINE

Five documentary photographers explore new territory, adding film to their image making repertoire

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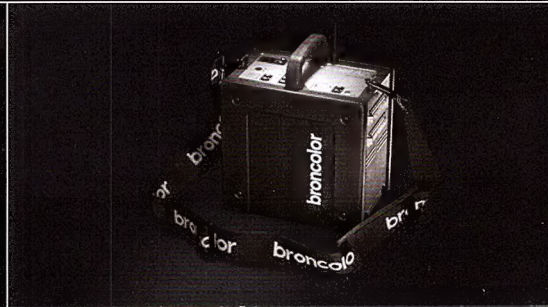
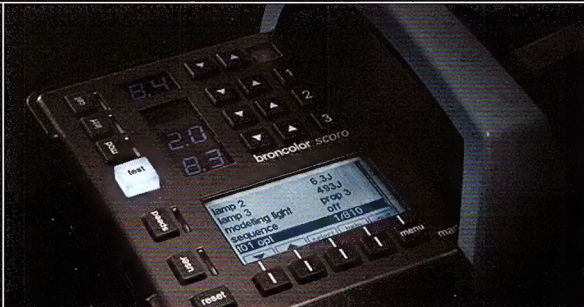
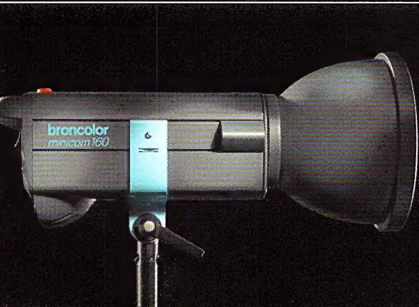
**Geo** magazine profiled. See page 85.



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# What's the story?

There's a loose theme to this month's issue relating to narrative, a subject hinted at with our "Storyville" cover line in reference to February's main feature (page 27), for which we talked to five documentary photographers about their experiences beyond the still image, creating films, multimedia and web documentaries.

The latter, an emerging form that French newspapers are experimenting with online, was pioneered by Samuel Bollendorff, for whom the extended narrative is a natural extension to his socially concerned work as a stills photographer, and whose imperative is not to let his images become divorced from his subject and his story he's telling. It's also brought fresh opportunities in the wake of the closure of the photo agency he founded, Oeil Public, and Bollendorff is working with six-figure budgets.

But, like the four others interviewed, he found it a challenge. Much is made of the technicalities – sound, editing, lighting and so on – when talking about the learning curve faced by photographers attempting their first films, but these can be learnt relatively easily (though mastering them is another matter). Structuring a narrative

documentary, and leading viewers through a story, is more of a conceptual leap to get your head around. Which is why we chose to make it our focus.

Elsewhere we pick up the theme in our interview with Steve Pyke (page 39), tracing his 30-year journey as a photographer, starting with a road trip he took following his escape from Leicester and a terrible accident that cost the lives of two friends, to his appointment as staff photographer on *The New Yorker*, replacing the late Richard Avedon. The interview focuses on the part cinema has played in his career, beginning with collaborations with Derek Jarman and Peter Greenaway, though whom he met the great cinematographer Sacha Vierny, whose sense of composition was such a great influence on the young photographer.

And on first look there's something clearly cinematic about Nicolas Dhervillers' latest project, *My Sentimental Archives*, which is February's featured Portfolio (page 50). That instinct is confirmed when you learn that the young Frenchman studied film and theatre before taking up photography, and for this project he employed an early cinematic technique, shooting in

daytime and then recreating his scenes in post-production to appear as if they were made after dark. The approach adds a sense of drama to the pictures, but it's also another way of linking past and present, which is the real subject of the series, for which he montages images from an old town archive together with contemporary landscapes.

Finally, I'm glad to report that our iPad app has proved a great success, with more than 50,000 downloads as we go to press in mid-January, and sales of our first paid-for issue easily exceeding our most conservative expectations. It's also been a critical success, with Apple featuring it as New & Noteworthy in its iTunes store over Christmas. In December, iMonitor named us in its list of the 10-strong Best European Magazine & Newspaper Apps alongside titles such as *Wired UK*, *Bild*, *Metro* and the *Daily Mail*.

We begin work on issue #3 straight after we've gone to press with this, our 7797th print issue, and we hope to bring you new of a joint subscription offer in the coming weeks, alongside issue #7798, out on 07 March, focused on studio and still-life photography.

**Simon Bainbridge**  
Editor

**Recent Comments on**  
[www.bjp-online.com](http://www.bjp-online.com)  
and *BJP*'s Facebook and  
Twitter pages.

*On post-processing in the digital age (in relation to our profile of 10b, issue #7795)*

It is a slippery slope to adjust images for news purposes unless you are OK with the constant complaint of media bias.

**Ron Cowie**

The idea that you can't dodge or burn or adjust the contrast of an image is just absurd!

**Charly Franklin**

Call me old-fashioned, but isn't this what good printers have always done... Interpret the neg (or these days, file) for maximum impact within the technical capabilities of the medium to be used for its dissemination?

**Tony Hopewell**

You could argue that, by making images more appealing to the eye, they will gain a bigger audience – therefore the photographer is doing his job by spreading the news! W. Eugene Smith (arguably one of the greatest photographic journalists of the 20th century) used to spend days in the darkroom perfecting a print, then he

would make a copy neg of the final one then always work from that copy neg, while Henri Cartier-Bresson never printed his own pictures. So where do we draw the line and who draws it?

**Jeff Moore**

*On the UK's largest museums investing in photography (#7796)*

It is all very well seeing a (welcome if belated and small) rise in expenditure on new acquisitions to the national holdings of photographs, but where is the attention to the preservation of the existing collection? That would allow it to be studied, exhibited and published, and so made properly available to the public as befits a major national public asset.

**Francis Hodgson**

I read this article with interest, and it occurred to me that those who pay for all of this have no say in what photographs – and indeed what paintings or sculptures – are chosen for national collections. This need not be so, as the internet would enable us

to nominate our own choices, which could then be very quickly sifted through, and the work with the most votes decide what gets bought and put where.

**Peter Harrup**

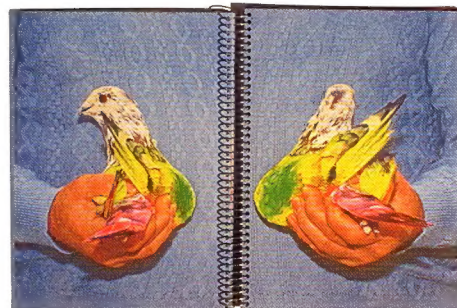
*On our best photobooks of 2011 (#7795)*

I bought myself *Paloma Al Aire* [by Ricardo Cases] as a Christmas present, thanks to *BJP*. So excited by this photobook.

**Melissa Lytle**

This feature was a great idea; I was waiting for a shortlist of the best photobooks.

**Roberto Berna**



**Ricardo Cases' *Paloma Al Aire* photobook.**

**Letters** Send us your opinion on this month's issue and any other matters relating to photography.

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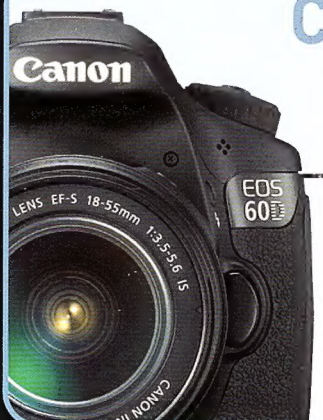


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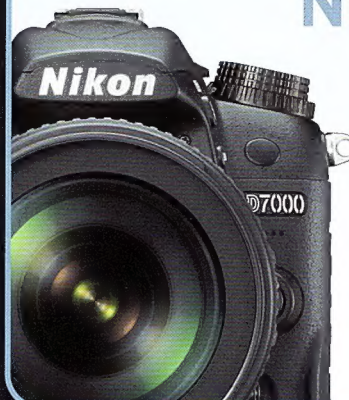
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## Nikon DSLRs



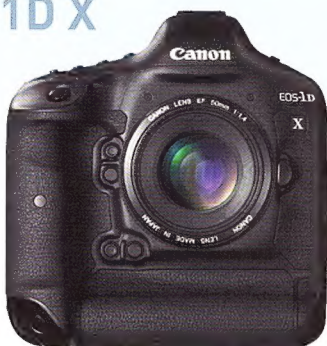
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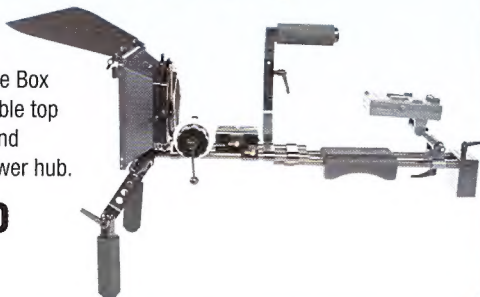
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## Corporate censorship

**The Musée de l'Elysée** in Lausanne has been forced to cancel its annual photography prize after its sponsor, Lacoste, asked for one of the shortlisted photographers to be excluded. Olivier Laurent reports.

Photographer Larissa Sansour was among eight artists shortlisted for the 2011 edition of the Lacoste Elysée Prize – until she was asked to leave because her work was deemed too political.

"Lacoste stated their refusal to support my work, labelling it 'too pro-Palestinian,'" claims the artist. Sansour was selected for her *Nation Estate* project, which "depicts a science fiction-style Palestinian state in the form of a single skyscraper housing the entire Palestinian population. Inside this new Nation Estate, the residents have recreated their lost cities on separate floors: Jerusalem on 3, Ramallah on 4, Sansour's own hometown of Bethlehem on 5, and so on."

Søren Lind, Sansour's husband, said the

Museum had selected her after seeing three of these images. "It was only in December that they called and said that unfortunately the work had been vetoed by someone at Lacoste," he tells *BJP*. "We don't know who, but we were told that it was a high-ranking person [at Lacoste]."

Lind adds, "We enquired about the reasons, and we were first told that the work was too pro-Palestinian, and then, when I called again, they told me that Lacoste wanted to remain apolitical as a brand. For me, that's one and the same thing."

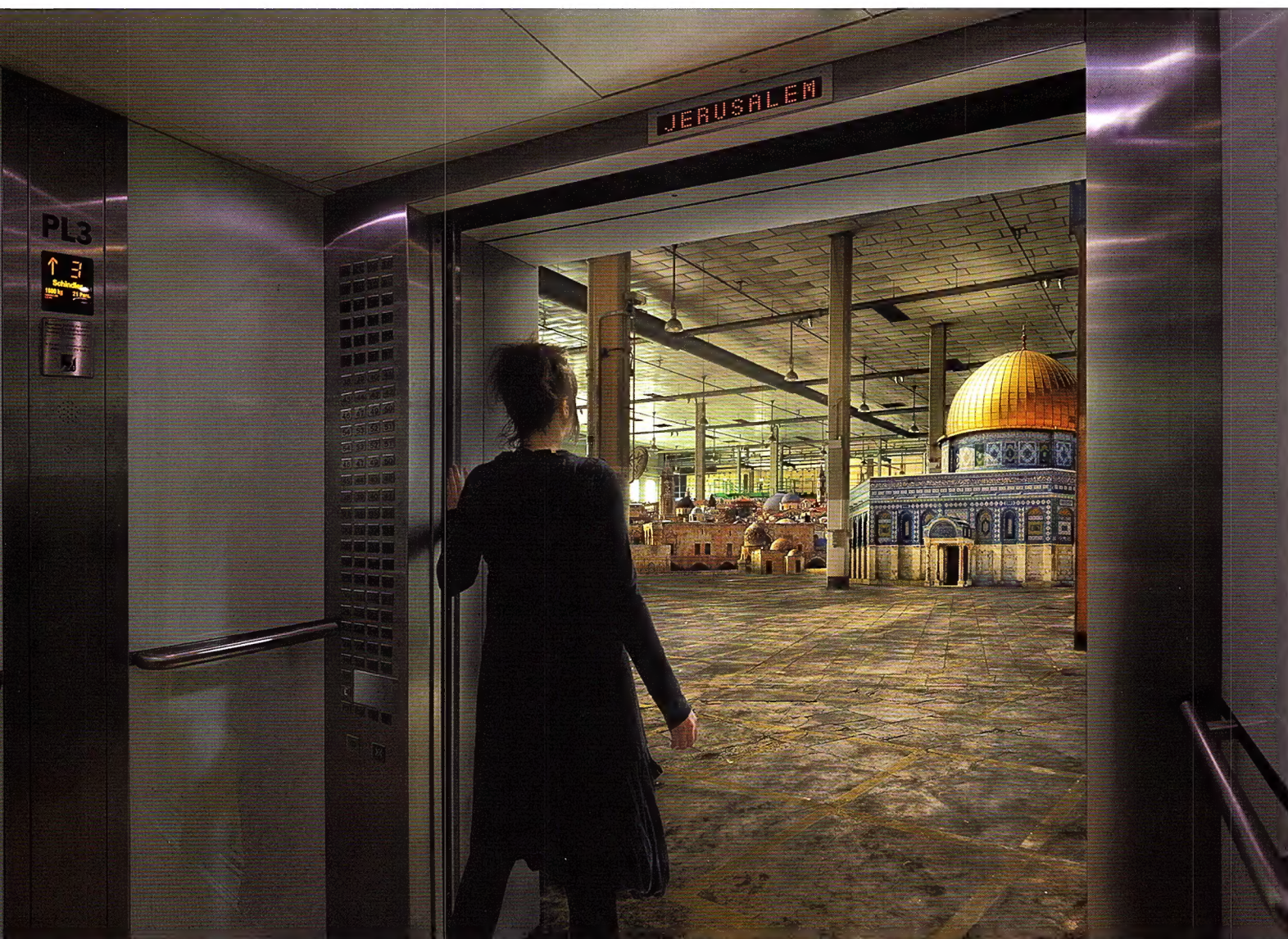
While the Musée de l'Elysée and Lacoste first claimed that "Larissa Sansour's photographic project *Nation Estate* was discarded because it didn't fit within the theme of this year's edition of the Lacoste Elysée Prize, which is 'La Joie de Vivre'," the museum was forced to admit that Lacoste had asked for Sansour's work to be removed. As a result, the Musée de l'Elysée decided to suspend the organisation of the Lacoste Elysée Prize 2011.

In a statement, it says, "The Musée has based its decision on the private partner's wish to exclude Larissa Sansour, one of the prize nominees. We reaffirm our support to

Larissa Sansour for the artistic quality of her work and her dedication. For 25 years, the Musée de l'Elysée has defended with strength artists, their work, freedom of the arts and of speech. With the decision it has taken today, the Musée de l'Elysée repeats its commitment to its fundamental values."

Lacoste has countered that, with its reputation at stake "for false reasons and wrongful allegations", it decided to remove its sponsorship of the prize, adding, "It was never Lacoste's intention to exclude any work on political grounds. The brand would not have otherwise agreed to the selection of Ms Sansour in the first place. Lacoste can only be saddened by the current situation. The sole goal was to promote young photographers." The French fashion brand says Sansour was excluded for not fitting the theme, despite having seen and backed her images for nomination.

Sansour says, "As a politically involved artist I am no stranger to opposition, but I've never been censored by the same people who nominated me before. Lacoste's prejudice and censorship puts a major dent in the idea of corporate involvement in the arts. It is deeply worrying." *BJP*



**Larissa Sansour** claims her work was removed from the Lacoste Elysée Prize for being too political. *Nation Estate*, Floor 1 © Larissa Sansour.



# Olympic ambitions

**Nikon** has unveiled its new flagship professional digital SLR, the D4, which will be released this month, and competing directly against Canon's EOS-1D X.

**Olivier Laurent reports**

"The D4 has been developed through continuous dialogue with professional photographers," says Jeremy Gilbert, Nikon UK's group marketing manager. "We believe we have produced a camera that will exceed expectations, and one that can be completely relied on to deliver in all situations."

"As you know, 2012 is an Olympic year; that's why we're launching this product today. It's going to be a huge event for London and the UK, and it's also going to be a massive event for Nikon, with more than 80 Nikon Professional Services staff coming from all over the world to support it."

Nikon's new flagship professional digital SLR features a newly developed 16.2-megapixel FX-format CMOS sensor, as well as the Expeed 3 image-processing engine first unveiled last year in the Nikon 1 compact interchangeable lens system. The combination allows the camera to deliver a burst rate of 11fps, while low noise and wide dynamic range are realised at high-ISO sensitivities "thanks to the optimised noise-reduction design and 14-bit A/D signal processing built into the sensor", says Nikon.

The D4's sensitivity range goes from ISO 100 to 12,800, which Nikon says can be dramatically extended to 204,800 to shoot in extreme low-light conditions. The camera's buttons can be back-illuminated at the flick of a switch, allowing photographers to use the camera in the dark.

James Banfield of Nikon UK says the company has also listened to professional photographers who were asking for lower ISO options, with the D4 offering a sensitivity option equivalent to ISO 50.

Nikon's Expeed 3 engine offers high-speed 16-bit image processing, which, coupled with the camera's

14-bit A/D conversion, delivers submission-ready JPEGs straight out of the camera.

In terms of video capabilities, the D4 can record footage at a variety of frame rates – 30p, 25p and 24p at full HD resolution, and 60p, 50p, 30p and 25p options at 720p. And full HD recording can be achieved in both FX and DX formats, as well as in native 1920×1080 crop. The D4 also offers new and improved audio controls, and includes an external stereo microphone input, as well as an audio out – a first for a DSLR.

Nikon has also responded to professional users requesting uncompressed HDMI output. "For those who need the purest video output for professional-quality editing, the D4 offers the possibility to output the uncompressed live view to external recorders and monitors. Data is output at 1080i (Full HD) at the designated image size and frame rate."

The camera also has an Advanced Scene Recognition System, fitted with a 91K-pixel RGB sensor "that meticulously analyses each scene for outstanding accuracy", says Nikon. "3D-subject tracking is particularly improved when shooting and tracking smaller subjects. Human faces are detected with startling exactness even when working in real time through the optical viewfinder. This level of detailed scene analysis is also utilised to support more accurate autofocus and auto exposure, even under the most

**Going for gold**  
Nikon has launched a new professional DSLR, the D4, in time for the 2012 Olympics.



challenging lighting conditions."

The D4 also has an Advanced Multi-CAM3500FX AF Sensor Module, which offers individually selectable or configurable nine-, 21- and 51-point coverage settings. "The autofocus sensor module and algorithms significantly improve low-light acquisition sensitivity capabilities down to -2 EV (ISO 100, 20°C/68°F). All 51 focus-type sensors are fully responsive with any AF Nikkor lens f/5.6," but also at apertures of up to f/8, claims Nikon. "A big plus for shooting sports and wildlife, this delivers a new level of detection potential when combining, for example, a 600mm f/4 AF-Nikkor lens with a Nikkor 2.0x teleconverter. If the combined aperture value is between f/5.6 and f/8, you even have the power of 15 central AF sensors available, of which nine are cross type sensors."

The D4 offers Wireless LAN support, using the new WT-5 Wireless Transmitter, which features both HTTP and FTP connection modes, as well as an Ethernet port. "Image workflow is very important," says Banfield. "It's just as important as ergonomics in this day and age. During the 2012 Olympics, photographers will have access to Ethernet connections to immediately transfer the images they've captured. The D4 links directly into that – so you can immediately shoot and transmit your images, without the need of a laptop."

Photo agencies have been asking for a camera with an Ethernet port because of the wireless spectrum's saturation, says Banfield. "Too

many people are now using wireless devices, and you just couldn't guarantee that you'd get the connection of the bandwidth that you needed."

"Society has evolved – multimedia has adapted. We've become accustomed to Twitter where we're seeing instant information. The value of images is no

longer measured in days or hours, but in minutes and sometimes seconds. Having that image in front of someone – tagged and referenced – is really important, so having the network capabilities is an important aspect. But, what we've done next is just as important. Photographers were telling us that the reason they were using laptops was not for editing anymore but to apply IPTC information. You can now do this in-camera. There are 14 available fields and 10 presets, saving photographers an enormous amount of time."

The Nikon D4 will retail at £4800 from 16 February, a month before the release of the Canon EOS-1D X camera, unveiled late last year. "Both ourselves and our competitors have played their cards in terms of sports cameras," says Banfield. "Now, we're going to see how agencies and photographers implement the technology we've released."

"This is a professional product," Banfield tells *BJP*. "We will always remain very competitive in this market, and this year is going to be as competitive as any year before. We've gone from having quite a poor market share in the sports area to having an incredible share [at the last Olympics], and depending on the event, we've even taken the lead." Nikon is actively preparing its staff for this summer's sporting festivities, claiming that some aspects of photography will be forever changed come July 2012. *BJP*

[www.nikon.co.uk](http://www.nikon.co.uk)

## Generation X

**Canon's Powershot G1 X** comes 18 months after the G12, and embodies the most ambitious evolution for the firm's popular series of high-end compact cameras.

The Powershot G1 X packs a 18.7×14mm CMOS sensor – a significant boost from the G12's 7.44×5.58mm CCD, but still short of Canon's usual DSLR sensors (22.2×14.8mm). However, the sensor offers the same pixel size and structure as Canon's EOS 600D DSLR.

"The increased sensor size allows photographers to have greater control over the depth-of-field, with increased potential to creatively and





**The Canon Powershot G1 X** now features an 18.7x14mm CMOS sensor, bringing the compact camera closer to DSLRs in terms of image quality, claims Canon.

**Fujifilm** claims its X-Pro 1 compact interchangeable lens camera will offer a resolution equivalent that is to that of a full-frame sensor.



artistically isolate a subject from its background," says Canon. "Improved dynamic range enables users to accurately capture shadows and highlights within the same frame, while the 14.3-megapixel resolution allows for the output of large-sized prints, or permits images to be cropped for more powerful compositions."

The G1 X features the Digic 5 image-processing engine, which, combined with the camera's larger sensor, offers improved low-light performance, with a maximum full-resolution ISO range of 100 to 12800.

The lens offers a 4× optical zoom range equivalent to 28mm to 122mm. It sports a six-blade aperture and includes an in-built three-stop Neutral Density filter.

The G1 X offers a four-stop optical image stabilisation, as well as extensive manual controls. It shoots images at a burst rate of 4.5fps, and can record full HD movies at 24fps.

The G series continues to offer a vari-angle LCD screen, but now includes a pop-up flash instead of the G12 integrated flash. The Powershot G1 X will be available from late February, priced £699. *BJP*

[www.canon.co.uk](http://www.canon.co.uk)

## Going pro

**Fujifilm** has unveiled the X-Pro 1 interchangeable lens camera system, which it claims will answer professional photographers' desire for a truly compact capture solution.

Fujifilm claims the sensor does not need an optical low-pass filter as it has been reconfigured to offer a new colour filter array, which is inspired by the random arrangement of fine film grain. The red, green and blue pixels are arranged in 6×6

pixel sets with "high a-periodicity, which increases the degree of randomness," and helps eliminate the fundamental cause of Moiré and false colours.

The X-Pro 1 features a new image-processing engine, the EXR Processor Pro, to deliver high-speed shooting capabilities of up to 6fps. It also sports a new Hybrid Viewfinder, first introduced in the X100, which will enable photographers to choose between an optical and electronic viewfinder. "When attaching a Fujinon XF-series lens on X-Pro 1, both the viewfinder magnification and bright frame size automatically switch to support the lens focal length," adds Fujifilm. "Viewfinder magnification switches to 0.37× for the 18mm lens, and to 0.60× when the 35mm or 60mm lens is mounted, letting you compose your shot with the bright, crystal clarity of an optical image."

The camera will be released in the UK in March, when three lenses will also be introduced – the XF 18mm f/2 R, the XF 35mm f/1.4 R and XF 60mm F/2.4 R Macro. "All three offer precise control over depth-of-field and deliver excellent out-of-focus bokeh thanks to the design of the moulded aperture diaphragm blades," says Fujifilm. "The blades are curved to create a circular image at all aperture settings, while the very edges of each blade are meticulously rounded off rather

than simply cut off, which delivers a sharper image. In addition, the solid feel of the high-quality metal barrel and detailed exposure setting in 1/3 step increments using the aperture ring fuel your desire to capture more photos with every shot."

Fujifilm has also said it will release a lens adapter compatible with Leica's professional lenses.

The X-Pro 1 has been designed with professional photographers in mind, says a Fujifilm representative. "It's dedicated to professional users who don't have a compact

system camera they can trust. We believe this is the first compact camera that will really appeal to professionals that are conscious about sensor quality. We also wanted to release something that is unique and different from what others are doing in the market."

Fujifilm's X-Pro 1 camera will be released in March. *BJP* understands that it will retail at £999 for the body only, with the lenses available from between £450 and £500. *BJP*

[www.fujifilm.co.uk](http://www.fujifilm.co.uk)

## End of the roll

**Kodak** is reported to be preparing to file for bankruptcy protection, and to be "making last-ditch efforts" to sell its portfolio of photography-related patents.

Kodak is declining to comment on what it says is rumour and speculation, but *The Wall Street Journal* is reporting that the company is "preparing for a Chapter 11 bankruptcy-protection filing in the coming weeks, should efforts to sell a trove of digital patents fall through".

In November 2011, Kodak revealed it needed more than \$500m in cash to continue operating, prompting the firm to sell its portfolio of photography patents. Kodak sold its Image Sensor Solutions business to Platinum Equity, a private investment firm, in the same month.

At the time, Kodak said its goal was to sell some of the assets it deemed "not central to

its transformation to a profitable, sustainable digital company." It added, "This sale is aligned with that strategy to generate cash to complete the transformation."

*The Wall Street Journal* says "The 131-year-old former blue chip company has started making preparations for a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing," in case it's not able to find a buyer for its patents. The news comes after two board directors, Adam Clammer and Herald Chen, recently resigned. According to reports, both men "had grown frustrated with the rate of progress in turning around Kodak's loss-making operations". *BJP*

[www.kodak.com](http://www.kodak.com)

## Instant revival

**Impossible and Polaroid** are set to release a series of collector's items from different eras of the history of instant film.

Impossible and Polaroid have announced the launch of Polaroid Classic, "a new product line that celebrates Polaroid's rich 75-year legacy". The firms continue, "The Polaroid Classic line will remind and delight Polaroid fans, new and old, of some of the most memorable products and designs in Polaroid history."

According to Impossible, which took over production of instant film three years ago after Polaroid closed its last factory, the Polaroid Classic line will initially focus on collector's items from different eras in Polaroid history with six to 10 products unveiled each year.

"Impossible is proud to develop and produce this new product line together with Polaroid," says Florian Kaps, founder of Impossible.

The first product to be released is a box of two packs of original Polaroid Instant Film for the Image and Spectra cameras. *BJP*

[www.the-impossible-project.com](http://www.the-impossible-project.com)  
[www.polaroid.com](http://www.polaroid.com)



**Impossible** has found old stocks of instant film, which it will sell as part of a partnership with Polaroid.



## All about Eve

**Eve Arnold**, the first woman photographer to join Magnum Photos, died on 04 January aged 99, leaving behind a vast portfolio.

Eve Arnold started her career in photography in 1946 at Stanbi Photos, a photo-finishing plant in New Jersey. She went on to study with Alexei Brodovitch at the New School for Social Research in New York, and joined Magnum Photos in 1957 – the first woman photographer to be accepted at the agency.

“She will perhaps be best remembered for her exceptional photographs of people; the famous, politicians, musicians, artists and the unknown,” says her agency. “Her intimate, sensitive and compassionate 10-year collaboration with Marilyn Monroe has cemented her as one of the most iconic portrait photographers of our time, but it is the long-term reportage stories that drove Arnold’s curiosity and passion.”

In her last interview with *BJP*, which was published in 2000, Arnold spoke of Magnum’s importance to her and her career. “I had a sense of belonging to a group who were doing good things – a quite remarkable bunch of people in the very beginning – and I was part of it and it was good to be there,



**Marilyn** While on location in Nevada, John Huston spent long hours, sometimes nights, at the gambling tables in Reno. Marilyn Monroe went with him once, toward the end of filming. *The Misfits*. Nevada, USA, 1960. Image © Eve Arnold/Magnum Photos.

helping to shape photojournalism, not only for yourself but for other people in the field.” The Magnum photographers were the first to pioneer the use of their own copyright, for example. “If we contributed anything, that’s what we did,” she told *BJP*. “We refused work unless we owned the copyright, and there were times when we were very broke and we needed the money.”

Arnold’s first photo story documented fashion shows in segregated Harlem in the 1950s, gaining the attention of Henri Cartier-Bresson and leading to her inauguration into the agency. Her work quickly gained respect and, despite working in a male-

dominated field, she told *BJP* she never felt restricted by her gender. “It was a big plus to be a woman working in those days,” she said. “Men liked to be photographed by women. It’s never been a problem. There were very few of us in the beginning and a couple of guys at Magnum were into patting me on the head, saying ‘There, there, little one’, which I found patronising. But although I do think that women think differently and have something to offer that men don’t have, I don’t believe you can recognise the difference between women’s photographs and men’s.”

Arnold was one of the first westerners to be granted a visa after the US and China established

diplomatic relations, and she completed a project on daily life in the country over two three-month trips in the late 1970s. She wanted to cover the Vietnam War, but was allegedly told by *The Sunday Times* art director Michael Rand, “You can’t run fast enough.” She commented to *BJP* that while she had “done difficult assignments [such as] working in Harlem when it was dangerous to go near it; working alone in the mountains in Tibet and Afghanistan”, she had never “done” war.

Instead she focused on people and personalities as disparate as Malcolm X, Joseph McCarthy, Marlene Dietrich, Joan Crawford and Richard Nixon, challenging the conventions of portraiture to give an intriguing insight into the human condition. Arnold published more than 15 monographs over her long career and TeNeues is now releasing *All About Eve*, a 216-page retrospective of her work including iconic images and many never-before published shots. *BJP*

www.magnumphotos.com  
www.teneues.com

## Underground woes

**London Underground** has been forced to apologise after it banned digital SLR cameras from one of its historic stations, for “health and safety” reasons. **Olivier Laurent reports.**

Late last year, London Transport Museum came under fire for banning digital SLR cameras at Aldwych underground station. A sign, displayed on 03 and 04 December and photographed by Tim Allen, read, “Due to their combination of high-quality sensor and high resolution, digital SLR cameras are unfortunately not permitted inside the station.”

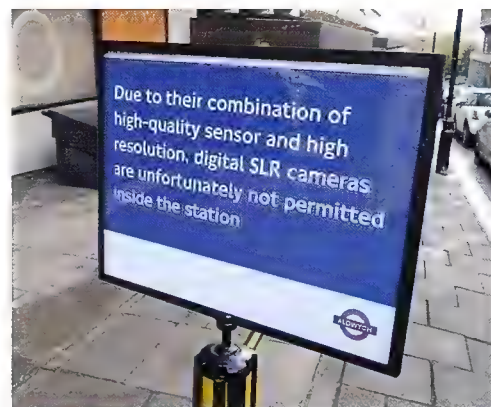
Speaking to *BJP*, a spokeswoman explained that DSLRs could represent a health and safety risk for visitors and delay visits to the historic station, which is no longer operational but opened to visitors at ticketed events two weekends per year. Now London Underground has revealed how the decision to ban the cameras was taken, after *BJP* filed a Freedom of Information request with Transport for London (TfL).

“The decision was made by London Underground and formed part of the terms and conditions for visitors to the event,” said TfL.

“The terms and conditions were sent to all ticket holders, posted on the London Transport Museum website in advance of the event as ‘essential information for all ticket holders’ and displayed at the station on the day.”

TfL admits the sign displayed outside the station was incorrect. “In the initial discussions regarding the event, a complete ban on photography and photography equipment such as tripods was considered because there is no lift at Aldwych and 2500 people would have to walk down a spiral staircase with over 160 steps. We were concerned that if people were carrying large, heavy cameras and equipment, there could be an accident going up and down this number of stairs. In addition we were concerned that, if there were delays because people were held up by visitors taking pictures, it was not going to be enjoyable for everyone and we might not have been able to get all those who had booked, safely round in the tours.”

Subsequently it was agreed that, instead of having an outright ban on all photography, only professional equipment would be deemed unacceptable, says TfL, “because it was felt that those photographers were more likely to want to take more pictures and want to stop for longer periods of time to take them. The term



**Photographer** Tim Allen took to Twitter when he discovered the following sign outside London’s Aldwych underground station, kick-starting a campaign of protests against the London Transport Museum. Image © Tim Allen/www.timallenphoto.co.uk.

‘professional equipment’ was then defined as digital SLRs and tripods.”

The Museum apologised, but said it may hold a photography day at the end of the year at the station, “for a smaller group of people who could use digital SLRs and other equipment. The smaller group will be easier to manage and allow visitors to get the photos they want while being able to safely get up and down the staircase.” *BJP*





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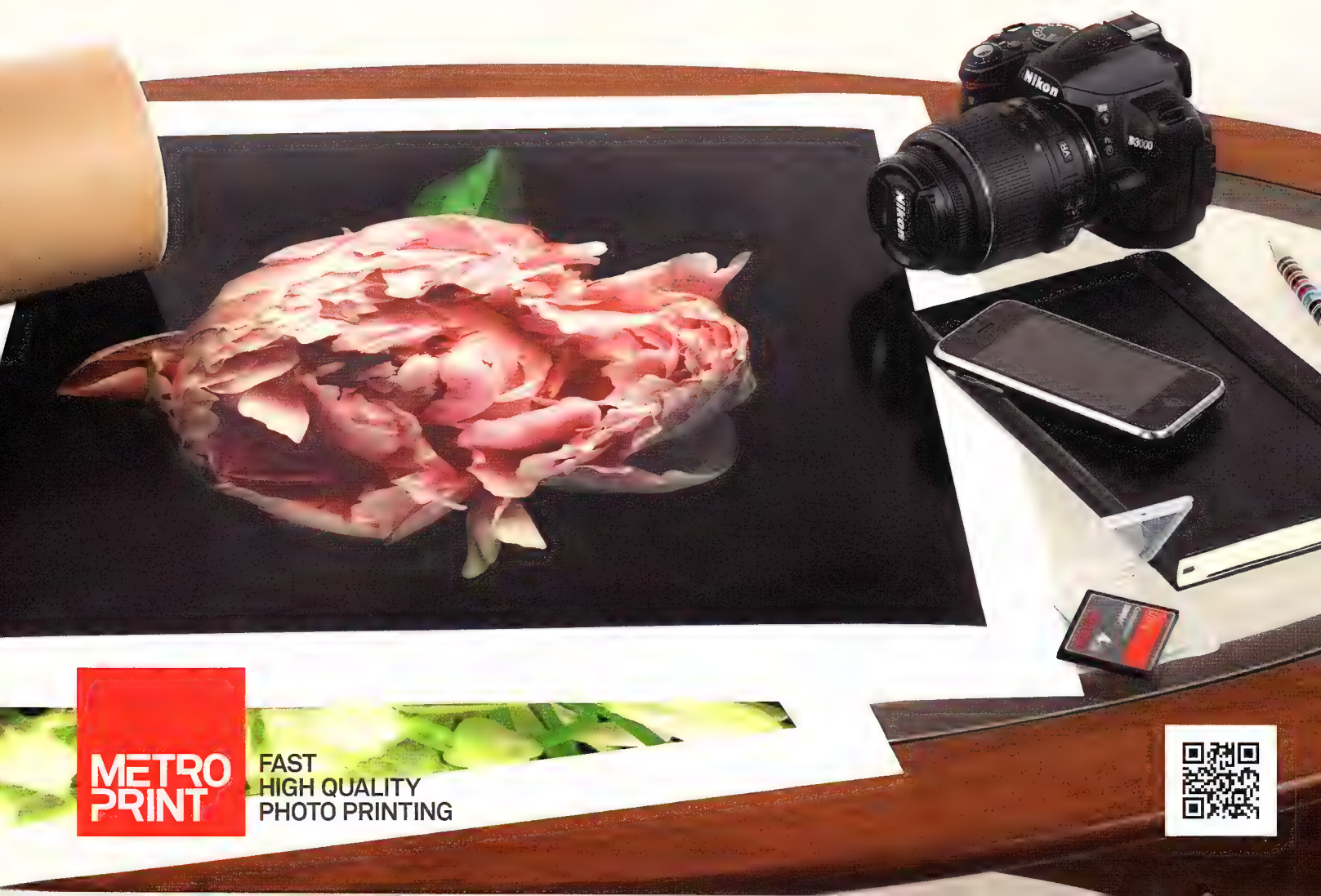


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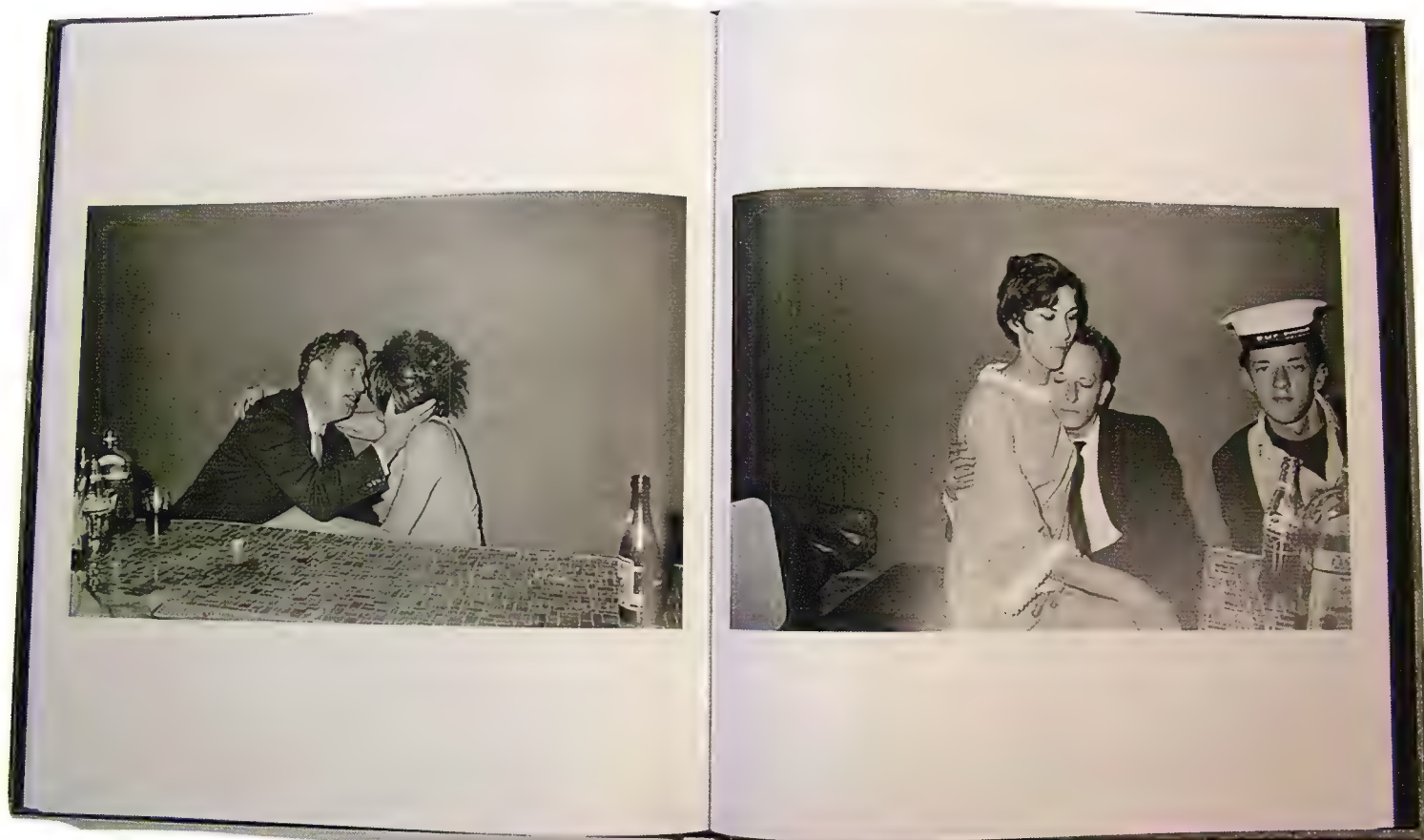


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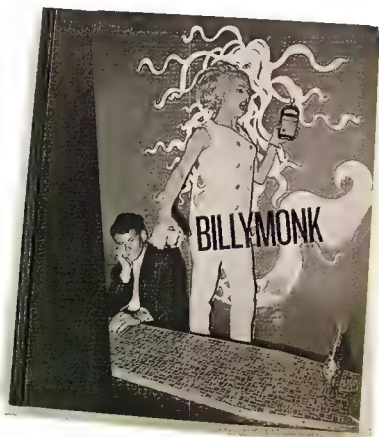
## Billy Monk

### Bouncer-turned-nightclub-photographer

Billy Monk was shot dead before he could see his first solo exhibition, and until recently, his work had disappeared with him. Text by Simon Bainbridge.

Anyone who enjoyed Billy Monk's pictures in *New Documents*, Martin Parr's latest discoveries shown at Brighton Photo Biennial 2010, will be delighted with this more comprehensive presentation of his work, lavishly published by Dewi Lewis, and complemented by Gabrielle Guy's elegant and understated design.

These are two adjectives you would never associate with Monk himself who, as legend tells, was too busy diving for diamonds to attend the only solo show put on while he was alive, and who was gunned down in a fight on his way to the exhibition two weeks later. But Monk never set out to be a photographer, shooting the images here while working as a bouncer at a notorious nightclub in Cape Town in the late 1960s, by way of making extra money on the side selling prints to partygoers.



It's his straightforward approach that appeals. Not burdened by a photographic education – though he was well versed in the school of life – he has none of the self-consciousness of a self-titled art photographer, honestly capturing those in front of him at The Catacombs and making them centre stage. But they're not entirely functional either, nor are they amateurish. As David Goldblatt notes in his forward to the 96-page book, the underground club was not an easy place to photograph, yet, "The composition is always coherent, the focus sharp, and the exposures allow for well-modulated tonalities in rich prints."

But more than that, there's clearly a rapport with the subjects, an insider's view that is neither judgmental nor too precious about presenting them with in a flattering light. "People seemed to welcome and even bask in Monk's attention," writes Goldblatt. And for all its low-life tardiness, *The Catacombs* looks like it was a pretty raucous place to be, and Monk clearly enjoyed working there until he quit – apparently citing his lack of feeling for Polaroid, the new film of choice for social photographers. He later opened a leather shop, named *The Mad Monk*. *BJP*

[www.dewilewispublishing.com](http://www.dewilewispublishing.com)

Above left: *The Catacombs*, 30 September 1967; Above: *The Catacombs*, 16 October 1967; Below: *The Balalaika*, December 1969. Images © Estate of Billy Monk.





- 1 *Ilgas* © Alnis Stable.
- 2 *Between finger and thumb*  
© Alexandra Serrano.
- 3 *Finn* © Sandra Birke.
- 4 *Grooming* © Geir Moseid.



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## Circulation(s)

**New talent is showcased** at a festival of young European photography, returning to Paris from 25 February.

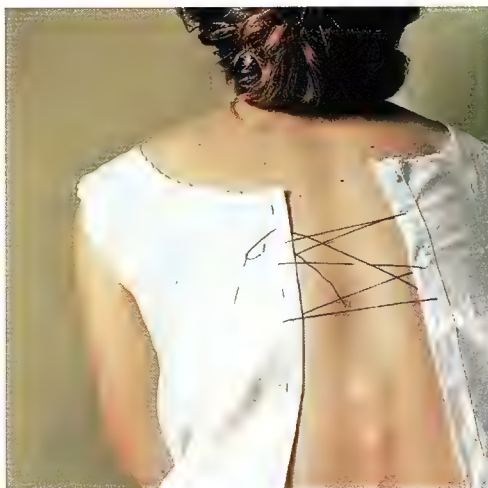
Organised by the Fetart association, Circulation(s) presents "a panorama of the new generation of European photographers", and aims "to highlight the initiatives launched by curators, gallery owners, festivals, collectives, photography schools or European publishers" to promote them.

The festival includes a major exhibition bringing together the work of 27 European photographers, including Kurt Tong, Katinka Goldberg and Desiree Good. Christine Ollier, art director of the Filles du Calvaire gallery in Paris, was given "carte blanche" to introduce four photographers – David de Beyter, Michel Bousquet, Yusuf Sevinçli and Matt Wilson – while the Catalan Institute of Photographic Studies was invited to showcase two of its artists – Salvi Danes and Alba del Rio Castellvi.

In addition to being a showcase for young photographers, the festival hopes to show "photographers and European actors from the world of image and to lay out, through the photographic medium, the outlines of a European identity".

Circulation(s) offers portfolio reviews on 10-11 March and is organising a wide-ranging debate on the future of young European photography. The festival is at the Côté Seine gallery at the Parc de Bagatelle in Paris from 25 February to 25 March. Entry is free. *BJP*

[www.festival-circulations.com](http://www.festival-circulations.com)



2



4





**A slice of life** Tom Craig's images give a sense of particular places at particular times. *Albanian Bathers*, 2006 © Tom Craig.

## The Bigger Picture

**Tom Craig and AA Gill** have collaborated for the past eight years on a series of articles that show there are at least two sides to every story. Diane Smyth reports.

"I shot this picture in a local park," says Tom Craig. "It was full of very typical scenes – some people were exercising, some walking dogs, some chatting. Then we came upon this scene and I immediately knew there was a picture to be had. The kid jumping off the board is the only thing in it that constitutes a moment, but it reminded me of an Henri Cartier-Bresson picture [*Juvisy*, France, 1938] and also a picture by Seurat [*Bathers at Asnières*, 1884]. There's no direct reference, but it reminds me of these moments in the history of trying to document anything."

"It's a slice of life, but there's something about the scene that means you know it's not British, and you know it's not sub-continental. To my mind it's very Albanian. I think it harks back to press photography in the early years, in which people tried to find an emblem or scene that really said something about a place. People now are taught how to construct a photo essay but

I wanted to find images that were microcosms, that had that sense of a particular place at a particular time. It's no accident that this exhibition is called *The Bigger Picture*."

The exhibition is on show at Flaere Gallery from 05 to 10 March, and it includes 20 images shot in 10 different countries, all are accompanied by text taken from essays by AA Gill.

Gill and Craig have worked together for eight years, travelling together on assignment for *The Sunday Times*, *Vanity Fair* and *The New York Times* to record their impressions of the places they visit. Their articles usually include a text of around 4000 words and six or so of Craig's images, but for this exhibition the photographer has taken a different approach, matching single images with extracts of relevant text. "The best photographs and photo essays don't need any text, they don't need to be propped up, but this exhibition is different," he says. "I was interested in the notion of a personal story told twice."

Gill and Craig work closely together, travelling together, eating together, and sticking together throughout the day, but Craig's images don't illustrate Gill's text, and Gill's text isn't an explanation of Craig's work. Instead they create

bodies of work that can stand alone in their own right, or that work together to depict the same place in two different ways. Sometimes they focus on the same moment or person, at other times the connection between their observations is less literal.

In a story on arctic hunting both focused on the death of a seal, for example; while writing about Albania, Gill retells a parable on capitalism he heard from a history professor who "looks out across the water at the speculative illegal palaces being built in the people's park".

"I'm making these observations on my own, Adrian's are what he finds interesting, sometimes they're both the same thing," says Craig. "If you go back 60 or 70 years, writers and photographers were assigned to work together and there was good reason for it. You can inspire each other in a story; and if the same moment has been observed by two different people, the two documents reinforce each other. Two heads are better than one." *BJP*

The Bigger Picture is on show at Flaere gallery, 28 Cork Street, London from 05-10 March. The show is sponsored by Spectrum Photographic. Tom Craig and AA Gill will be in discussion at The Frontline Club, Paddington, on 01 March. [www.flaere.com](http://www.flaere.com) [www.frontlineclub.com](http://www.frontlineclub.com)



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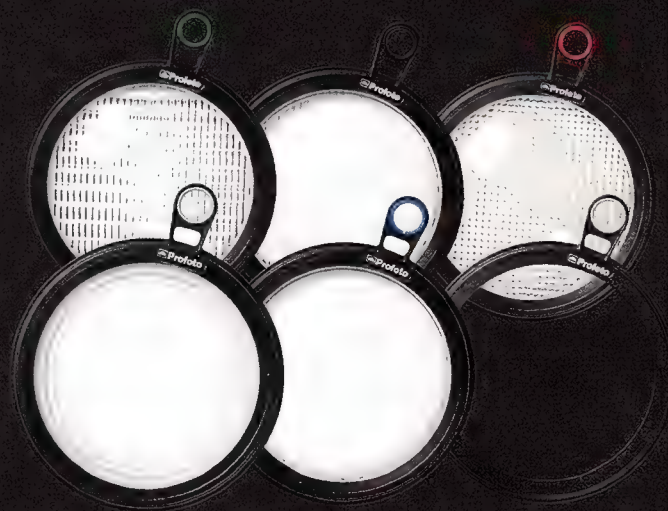
## Cine Reflector

The Cine Reflector combines the film industry's popular Parabolic reflector (PAR) with the classic Profoto Zoom reflector – a long time favorite among our users.

The Profoto Zoom reflector is a textured "Open face type" reflector that produces a crisp, even light. The unique Zoom function lets you adjust the beam angle in the range of 35–105° without changing lens.

In addition, five different lenses provide a great array of light shaping possibilities. This, in combination with scrims, color filters and barn doors, grants photographers an unparalleled artistic freedom. The whole range of Profoto lighting can be used with the Cine Reflector including ProDaylight and ProTungsten.

The Cine Reflector has a double layer housing to protect users from burns and increase robustness. The housing also provides an umbrella attachment, which is favored by many photographers. A metal stirrup bracket is provided for overhead mounting.





**Every story has a beginning, middle and an end.** But for the four artists in this month's Projects, their featured works are still evolving as they find new ways to illustrate their chosen subjects. Interviews by Diane Smyth.



Images © Alison Stolwood.



ALISON STOLWOOD  
[www.alisonstolwood.com](http://www.alisonstolwood.com)

"With these images, and much of my work, I am interested in looking at the perceived distinctions between natural and artificial," says Alison Stolwood, a recent graduate of the Photography MA at the University of Brighton who has already gained attention through exhibitions such as *Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2011* (on show at Site Gallery in Sheffield and the ICA in London) and *Lost in Transit* at Impressions Gallery in 2009. Photographing flowers and butterflies, her recent work is at first sight pastoral and pretty, but it's more informed by concepts of technology and artificiality than pure aesthetics.

"I became more and more focused on the farmed and cultivated nature of the wildflowers and the butterflies that I was using in the images, as most are protected and illegal to source from the wild. I became aware of the market for farming both the flower species and the butterflies for collectors and research and how unintentional cross-breeding from accidental release or pollination can threaten the integrity of the wild varieties. The problems that can be caused by introducing cultivated species into the wild further describe the delicacy of things for me."

Stolwood worked in a studio with a 4x5 camera, taking photographs on colour negative film and shooting each scene multiple times. She then used Photoshop to combine the shots, recording the various positions each butterfly adopted in

each session and different stages in their life cycles. "I was learning more about butterflies at this time, finding out about how species rely on particular habitats, weather conditions and specific plants. In addition, some butterflies depend on other species for their survival, such as the re-introduced Large Blue's reliance on red ants to complete their life cycle. I was very interested in making an image that reflected this complexity of needs and how this could then be thought of on a bigger scale; combining separate shots meant I could work with a small number of butterflies and still show a large number in the resulting images. It also meant that I could make images that showed the chrysalis, the butterfly emerging, and the adult butterflies all at the same time.

Stolwood has made seven images and a video so far; she's planning to make more images this spring with a similar ethos but a different look and feel, shooting in a tropical butterfly house and using chroma key backgrounds to make the photo montage more evident. She's also intending to shoot some 3D images, combining nature with cutting-edge technology. "Experimenting with technologies is very important to my work because it is through technology that things are understood," she says. "From a scientific perspective, a new piece of equipment can make a new piece of research possible, and similarly from a visual perspective, a new technological tool can render a different understanding." *BJP*





PAULA WINKLER  
www.paulawinkler.com

## Close Encounters

Berlin photographer Paula Winkler unveils men who find sex online.

"As a photographer and as a woman, I miss the heterosexual gaze on the male body – and I mean 'real' bodies that are not taken from advertising or modelling agencies," says Paula Winkler.

It's an observation many have made, but Winkler has taken it one step further by shooting a project titled *Exceptional Encounters*, which actively seeks to redress the balance. Using the pseudonym of Renate Rost, the Berlin-based photographer goes onto internet sex platforms and contacts men via email, asking if she can photograph them naked in hotel rooms. If they are interested, she talks to them by phone and

explains more about the project, then arranges a date on which to photograph them.

"Sometimes there is time for a coffee in advance, other times we immediately start shooting," says Winkler. "The shooting itself takes about an hour and I never know what kind of images will emerge. The poses depend on the kind of access we are able to establish with one another within this short encounter – sometimes it gets more playful, while other times it remains rather serious. I take whatever I get from my sitters and I try to push it a little further without crossing the line of them feeling silly."





Winkler has been working on the series for a year, having started it as her diploma project at Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences, and has contacted hundreds of men, resulting in a dozen images for the series so far. She exhibits the shots as large format prints, but has also put together a small booklet, which she hopes to turn into a larger publication one day – though she admits the reaction to the project has ranged from those who couldn't bear to look at it, to men who felt happy to see bodies like their own.

For Winkler, the reasons behind the project were two-fold. "On the one hand I am very

interested to see what kind of men are really hidden behind these anonymous internet profiles," she says. "And on the other hand I am very keen on transforming their sexually coded bodies into an image. I enjoy challenging the balance of power of the male gaze and the female object and let the men become my object of desire. For this reason I only work with heterosexual men that react to me as a female photographer. The process of photographing becomes a role play in itself, which reveals a sexuality and transforms it into an image that often even surprises my sitter." *BJP*



MAJA DANIELS

www.majadaniels.com

## Two in One

Twin sisters Monette and Mady are used to being photographed for fashion and advertising shoots. But for **Maja Daniels**, the challenge was to capture something more intimate about their lives.

Swedish national Maja Daniels studied journalism, sociology and photography before going on to assist fashion legend Peter Lindbergh for three years, and all of these influences feed into her latest ongoing series, *Monette & Mady*. Featuring sisters who dress exactly alike, the project gains much of its power from the uncanny sight of identical twins set against the familiar backdrop of Paris, but also from the restrained pastel colours Daniels uses to portray them.

"Monette and Mady recently said that they see 'Nordic colours and the Nordic sea' in my images, and that they don't have the – as they put it – 'typical Latin aesthetic' through which they are used to seeing themselves," says the London-based photographer. "I'm not quite sure exactly how to interpret all that, but they say that they enjoy this new breeze and that's all that matters to me."

Daniels noticed the sisters when she was living in Paris and was immediately fascinated, although, she says, "a bit like the rabbit from *Alice in Wonderland*, they always seemed to be on their way somewhere; as soon as I had spotted them, they were gone." After wondering if they were real, she

eventually plucked up the courage to approach them. Daniels had been working on a long-term project about people with Alzheimer's, which got her thinking about stereotypes of old age, so she was intrigued by how little Monette and Mady respected convention. "They seemed completely indifferent to this in the playful way they carried themselves and stood out from the crowd," she says. "They didn't seem to have an age, and when I finally approached them I found out that they had stopped celebrating their birthday long ago."

The twins refer to themselves as "I" instead of "we", always eat the same food in the exact same portions, and often finish each other's sentences. Neither has ever married or had children, and in fact they have made a profession out of their similarities – acting, dancing and modelling as a duo in French films and adverts, and posing for big-name photographers such as Nick Knight and Bettina Rheims. This background meant they were happy to let Daniels take portraits of them, although getting them to agree to an ongoing project was much harder. "They didn't quite understand why I wanted to document their everyday life,"

says Daniels. "It is an interesting challenge to make them understand how fascinated I am by what seems so natural to them. We are constantly negotiating what it is we are doing together and, although Mady and Monette enjoy the attention of being photographed, it took me a year to get them to let me follow them a bit more intimately."

She's had some early success with the project, with one of the images [right] selected for the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize (on show at the National Portrait Gallery in London until 12 February), but she intends to keep going, given that the bulk of her images so far were taken over one week in Paris, with Daniels joining the twins on their daily routine whenever they suggested. "Since a great part of Monette and Mady's lives is about performing, in front of cameras or on a stage as well as on the street, I want to include images of them posing for me in the project," she says. "But I want to mix these more staged images with pictures of them interacting as they go about their daily business. This combination seems to work just fine and I like the fact that it's not always easy to tell the two approaches apart." *BJP*







Images © Maja Daniels.





DANIEL GORDON  
www.danielgordonstudio.com

## Rip it up and start again

Daniel Gordon takes a sculptural approach to photography.

Education has played a pivotal role in Daniel Gordon's career. He attended "an extremely experimental high school", which used Gestalt theory as a means to teach emotional growth alongside a more traditional curriculum, altering the course of his life and opening him up to new possibilities – "of which being an artist was one". From there he went on to study for an MA at Yale University, where the tutors include Gregory Crewdson, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Paul Graham, Tod Papageorge, Jock Reynolds and Collier Schorr. Yale is known for a certain type of staged photography,

in which set-up shots blur the boundary between fact and fiction, but Gordon never felt under any pressure to follow suit. "I guess I don't really see [my work] either fitting it or in opposition to any particular heritage," he says.

In fact, Gordon's deliberately gauche images look like the antithesis of Crewdson and diCorcia's polished work – but they also probe the boundaries between fact and fiction, questioning the veracity of photography and the nature of its link with reality. Gordon downloads images found online, prints them out then

constructs them into 3D sculptures depicting still lifes or people. He photographs the sculptures, turning them back into 2D objects that fool the eye. "If I look at what I'm making now, and what I've made in the past, on a fundamental level I see a continued investigation into this phenomenon that seems like magic. But in truth, I think it's a complex combination of factors that create the possibility of allowing the camera to transform what's in front of its lens," he explains. "I'm interested in transforming space, light and time photographically to make something that never existed

the way we see it in a photograph."

Gordon downloads the images from the internet for convenience, and also because he likes the idea of making immaterial objects material; once he's made a sculpture he lets it fall apart over time, then re-uses the elements for other work. His studio has become "a big mess of images all jumbled up through years of searching and printing found images", he says, and as the images decay he finds new ways of using them. "A kind of improvisation is possible," he says. "But I always make the joins visible, to reveal my hand." *BJP*



Images © Daniel Gordon.









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# STORYVILLE

**Olivier Laurent** speaks with five photographers who have chosen different approaches to documenting their subjects, appropriating film and multimedia into their image-making repertoire to develop a more narrative-led approach.



It's just three years since Canon and Nikon first introduced high-definition video recording to their digital SLRs, opening up new storytelling possibilities for filmmakers and photographers alike. Now it's near impossible to find a camera that doesn't sport a red-coloured recording button and, according to Samuel Bollendorff, there lies a problem. "Too many photographers are unquestioning of the quality of their footage when they push this little button; just because you're now able to shoot films, doesn't mean you should," says the award-winning photographer and director, who helped pioneer a new kind of web documentary in France, with which he hopes to "capture the attention of the digital audience and reconnect them to the real world".

Structuring a narrative documentary film remains a challenge, says the Frenchman, who builds storyboards before he begins shooting, while others, such as Leo Maguire and Shaul Schwarz, didn't realise the potential to tell a stronger story with moving images until months or years after they started working on a project in stills. For Maguire, whose first film was

broadcast on Channel 4 in January, the biggest challenge was mastering audio. "In photography, the frame is your content," he tells *BJP*. "But in film, your content is the frame. You need to be listening to audio. You need to hear the conversation, even if somebody is off camera or walking off, you have to start editing it in your head."

Marcus Yam had no choice but to start shooting video when working for a small newspaper in Atlanta, but he quickly warmed to the medium, and has since won a World Press Photo award for his film, *The Home Front*. For Philippe Brault, video was a way to escape conventional narrative techniques – years after he had refused to switch to digital photography, favouring instead, large format film cameras. As for Schwarz, who readily admits that he "crashed and burned" when he first turned to filmmaking, video has now become integral to his career, opening new doors in a market that can be, at times, hard to crack.

Leo Maguire spent four years documenting two gypsy families who fight for respect and pay the price in cycles of revenge. His film premiered on Channel 4. Images © Leo Maguire.



SHOUL SCHWARZ  
www.shaulschwartz.com

The first time he shot a feature documentary film, Shaul Schwarz “crashed and burned,” he tells *BJP*. “But it was a great learning experience.” The film, shot in 2003 in Gaza, followed groups of Jewish settlers in the months leading to their forced evacuation. At first, it was a purely photographic project, but the Israeli soon realised that although he could take “heartbreaking pictures”, he couldn’t always tell the entire story.

“For example, one day I came upon this settler, a farmer. We all knew that in four months he would have to leave, but he was there planting seeds in the ground, and the seeds he was planting were for flowers that

would only be ready to be picked seven months later. I could have taken pictures of that man, but I felt that no matter what I did and what the captions were going to say, these pictures would never tell the story that this man was putting \$100,000 worth of seeds in the ground. I understood that this story was only going to be powerful in video.”

Schwarz’s first documentary was released in Israel for a short period of time and, after spending \$70,000 and 18 months shooting it, the New York-based photographer received only a \$1500 offer from a German TV network. Suffice to say, he didn’t sell it – although, Schwarz now says he should have done.

For the next three years, Schwarz – who’s a contract photographer for *Time* magazine, and is represented by Reportage by Getty Images

– stayed clear of video. “I quickly realised that the films you do could be very valuable, or they could be valued at almost nothing,” he says. But when Canon released the EOS 5D Mk II in 2008, he thought again. “I realised that I had a true interest in making short and full-feature films; the fact that my camera now offered me the option to shoot video by simply pressing a button made me want to try it again.”

In the last two years, Schwarz has been filming as much as he’s been photographing – “if not more”. “I’m not crashing and burning any more, and most of what I’m shooting now are actual assignments – from *Time*, for example. And it’s great because it’s changed the way I’m thinking about stories. Now I’m no longer confined to photography. I think that any photojournalists that have been out there for a

Shaul Schwartz isn’t new to documentary filmmaking, having shot his first film in 2003. Now he’s preparing *Narco Culture* to premiere at festivals in early 2013. Images © Shaul Schwarz/Reportage by Getty Images.





while have witnessed extraordinary stories that they were unable to portray with still images. Faced with this situation, I can either try to tell the story with images that might not wow people, or I can try telling it with video."

And that's what he's been doing in Mexico for the past couple of years. In *Narco Culture*, a feature documentary scheduled for release later this year, Schwarz looks at the ways in which the country's drugs war has affected wider society, portraying how the iconography of ultra-violent gang culture has been adopted into wider society through art and music. "There is a trend towards glorifying violence," he says. "Narco traffickers are now the new models for fame and success."

Schwarz went into this story just taking pictures. "I was very interested in this subject. But after a year, I would look at it and realise

that the cultural aspect of the war could not be told with still images." For example, Schwarz is following a singer whose dream is to be asked by a member of the cartel to write a song about his life. And although he could have been taking photographs of that man's story, Schwarz says that for the audience to truly understand how the violence has infiltrated the country's bloodstream, "You need to hear the crazy lyrics you can hear during the concerts. These men are spitting out what they feel, and you just can't explain that with a still image."

Of course, says Schwarz, while the medium has changed, a photographer still applies his style and aesthetic approach to the film, but the finished product is not going to be the same. "For example, when I'm shooting still images, I tend to be very close to the action. But when you're

trying to put a good film together, you quickly learn that you need long and wide shots, as well as mid-range shots. It sounds elementary, but it makes such a big difference."

And that's why Schwarz thinks that photojournalists have to make a huge leap when they start working with video. "The way you look at light and how you compose your pictures doesn't change, but a film is much more than that. It's a bit scary [at first], but in the last year or so I've been getting more and more assignments to shoot video, and now I'm getting calls from *National Geographic*, *CBS* and *60 Minutes* to shoot stuff. It's opening doors, and giving me more responsibility. And sometimes you flop, of course, but it also gives you more opportunities. I wouldn't want to go back to being just a still photographer." *BJP*





PHOTOGRAPHY  
www.philippe-brault.com

Something of a nonconformist, Philippe Brault has always tried to avoid getting drawn into the doom-mongering debates that seem to plague the photojournalism community, and he deliberately eschews the conventional approach of the majority of his colleagues. When shooting digital became pretty much compulsory for newspaper assignments, for example, he went back to medium and large format cameras. So in 2006, when French youth took to the streets to protest a government proposition to deregulate labour, Brault covered the demonstration with a medium format film camera. "I went against the flow," says the Frenchman. "I received an assignment from *Libération*, and when I brought back the pictures, they liked them and asked me to continue, but with a digital camera." He refused. "I just was not interested, and I didn't know what I could have done on this subject with a digital camera."

Brault continued his story with his film camera, and it worked. "I've never sold as much in my career than with that story. The thing was that every morning I would go out with just three

rolls of film in my pockets, and I knew that I had to tell my entire day on the streets using just these three rolls of film. I didn't allow myself to have one additional roll of film. I had imposed this on myself. I needed these kind of rules."

Following this experience, Brault bought a large format film camera, which he took to Lebanon. "I would lay out my kit on the floor of some derelict house and load my films in the charging bag in front of a Hezbollah militia man in charge of watching my every move. In spite of the language problem, our eyes and hands being our means of communication, I think he quickly understood that I had not come to 'steal' pictures."

He believes the camera-loading ritual somehow "encouraged a feeling of mutual trust", and immediately enjoyed the slow ritual of working on just one photo at a time. "One photograph costs €10, so I could only shoot three or four photos a day. I did a few stories like that, where I would impose on the newspaper this way of taking photographs and it worked. I received a lot of assignments. I think these were the best two years of my photographic career. It felt good and it allowed me to take my time with people, to actually speak to them. When I would go on an assignment, I did so without a computer. I didn't

have to back up anything. As soon as I had loaded the films in my camera, I could go back outside and participate in the daily life of the people I was covering, instead of spending hours at night in front of a computer."

In 2008, after watching Samuel Bollendorff's web documentary, *Journey to the End of Coal*, he developed an idea with French journalist David Dufresne. "Like me, David was asking himself a lot of questions on where journalism was heading. He didn't really know how to approach his job. When we saw Samuel's work, we thought that was an interesting development, and it was something we could apply to our own stories."

What resulted, *Prison Valley*, is an interactive web production that explores the penal industry in Cañon City in Colorado in the US, with its 13 high-security jails, including Supermax, "the new Alcatraz of America". The documentary blends together video, still images and audio, and allows viewers to control their journey. But, says Brault, "When we first started this project, we didn't really think about shooting video. Of course, we were planning to film our interviews, but that was pretty much it. We were thinking that we would be working with photography above everything else."





It was only when Brault started using his new Canon EOS 5D Mk II that he started to think seriously about moving image. "I had a blast with it," he remembers. "I even built my own camera dolly." And when he began to wonder why he was having so much fun with it, he realised that throughout his career as a photographer, he had never really taken that many images. "I have a hard time pressing the shutter button. I don't take photos every single day. In fact, I only take photographs when I have something to say, a story to tell. I realised that I was often frustrated in my work, and that in a lot of cases I would have preferred to film these stories. I felt that some of my images didn't tell the whole story."

"Video changes the way you tell your story," he adds. "It's complicated to explain, because there is this eternal question on whether you should film or take photos, and why? But I went to Colorado twice – in June and in September 2008, and in one of the prisons on my first visit I had only taken photographs, and I felt that something was missing in terms of the story's narrative. My images didn't really explain to the viewers the routine of everyday life in these prisons. And so in this case I think that video is more interesting to accentuate that situation."

In terms of narrative, mixing both still and moving images can be complicated, Brault admits. "When I go on a shoot, I really need to know what I'll be doing. I can't say: 'Here I'll do a photograph, and there a video.' I need to know in advance. I need to say to myself, 'Today I will only use video. And tomorrow, I will only photograph.'" That's why he stopped using a single camera body to shoot both. "I realised that using the same camera for both media messed up my photography at times. My Canon had become my main tool to shoot videos, so I needed to have a different tool for still images. I'm still interested in mixing both media – but as long as one doesn't dominate the other."

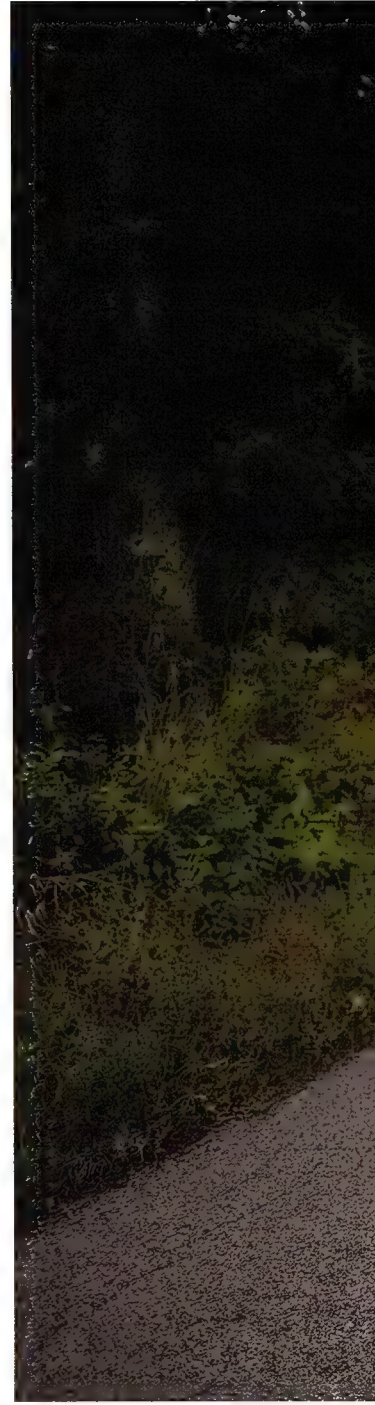
Now Brault has split his life in two. "I'm still a photographer, but I also work as a director of photography on small feature films and documentaries. I like this way of working; I prefer it over boring assignments. I'm not young any more, so I need to do something that interests me. I also have a feeling that working on these films has helped my photography a lot. I believe my images are now better composed; something is happening to my work. Kind of like what happened when I switched to large format. I feel more at ease." *BJP*

Philippe Brault, with writer David Dufresne, won first place in the Interactive Productions category of World Press Photo's first multimedia contest, with the judges calling *Prison Valley* a "magnum opus visually, conceptually and in terms of the information and reporting offered". Images © Philippe Brault.





Marcus Yam produced *The Home Front* while interning at *The New York Times*. The piece is now a multi-award-winning multimedia film. Images © Marcus Yam for *The New York Times*.



Five years into his career, Marcus Yam has already won a World Press Photo award, a Pictures of the Year International prize and an Emmy – all for a multimedia project he shot while interning at *The New York Times*. The piece, *The Home Front* (part of the newspaper's *A Year At War* series of documentaries), follows the lives of Isaac and Joey after their dad, Army Staff Sergeant Brian Eisch, is deployed to Afghanistan. "For a year, while their dad is at war, the boys are forced to leave their home in upstate New York to live with their uncle in Wautoma, Wisconsin. Without the stability of their only parent, the boys have to adapt to a new environment and new school during the length of the deployment, waiting for their dad to get home safe."

Yam first started experimenting with video in 2008 while working for a newspaper in Atlanta. "They made me do it," he says. "They were trying to get us all to do video," and Yam quickly adopted it. "I felt like I was re-learning photography. I found that I was a quick learner and I liked it enough to want to retain all the information I had learnt." Despite that, Yam still had reservations. "Back then I only had two years of experience in the field," he explains. "I was hungry as a photographer and I felt it took away from my ability to practise and hone photography." In fact, early on Yam made the decision to separate his photography from his video work. "When I shot video I felt that I had to pour myself into it and just makes films. I wanted that separation to be able to do photography the way I wanted. So I started doing video, then learnt about audio on its own and how to master it, and mix it with images on my own. But it wasn't until I got to *The New York Times* when I married the two things together."

Today it's sort of a mish-mash, he explains. "Everything just comes together." But he still tries not to do it all at once. "Anybody that tries to jump in and do it all at once will just crash and burn – unless you're super talented, but then you should be in Hollywood!"

*The Home Front* was created when writer James Doa and photographer Damon Winter of *The New York Times* heard of Isaac and Joey's

emotional response to their father's deployment. "They were looking for characters that readers could relate with," says Yam, who got involved in *A Year At War* when the newspaper realised that they had a dire need for a second photographer on the project. "Damon was constantly being deployed to Afghanistan and was unable to do a lot of things that happened in the US," says Yam. "And they needed someone with knowledge of multimedia, and I just happened to have been there at the right place and at the right time. I had the right skills."

*The Home Front* mixes video footage with still images and audio, and while *The New York Times* never really had a script – "we just couldn't predict what would happen," says Yam – it knew what kind of story it would be telling and

what would be needed, and that meant knowing whether Yam would need to shoot video or images. "At the time, I was still relatively new to mixing the two. So, early on, we decided that if I were to shoot a scene, I had to pick one medium and stick with it – either I did it all in video or all in still images."

For example, Yam and his producer, Nancy Donaldson, had decided that they would record Eisch's homecoming in video only. "We decided that we would not have any photos of it, because you just can't shoot both at the same time without hampering the quality of one or the other. You have to pick one and we felt that for that scene video would be better. Photos have a way of showing you a 1/100s moment that nobody else sees. But for the homecoming, we knew that





the entire event would be emotional. We felt that photos would not translate the movements of their bodies – him bending down, his kids running straight to him, ramming into him and crying. Photos, as effective as they are, didn't translate well in this case because it's a very long moment. Photos of that moment would not do it justice as opposed to showing one full clip of it."

"We had constant conversations before and during the shoots about what we might see out there, and what medium we would use," he adds. "It's the photographer's responsibility to check in and have these conversations – even when you're in the field."

For *The Home Front*, Yam was working with a full team of editors and producers – "at *The New York Times*, we like to separate tasks," he says.

And that was extremely helpful "because it takes a load off you knowing you've got a very specific job to do – that you don't have to worry with certain things such as the production end." He adds, "It lets you focus and concentrate on what you need to do best. I love working with people. For me it came easily, but not everyone is like that. A lot of photographers are lone wolves."

But now he's back to doing a lot of it on his own. "I just finished a three-part project following a hockey player. It's more and more of a one-man thing now, but it all depends on the scale of the project. Multimedia really requires you to be technical. If you're not technical, you're going to have a hard time. I used to be an aerospace engineer in my past life, so I'm a geek. All this technical stuff is fascinating to me." *BJP*





Leo Maguire spent two years shooting *Bloodlines* as a photographic project before he realised the potential of his story as a film. Last month, *True Stories* premiered on Channel 4 in the UK. Images © Leo Maguire.

6



www.leomaguire.com

*Bloodlines*, a long-term project by photographer Leo Maguire, has gone through several evolutions in the past four years. "I started this project in 2007 originally as a documentary photo story," says Maguire. "I had written an overambitious proposal on documenting the world of gypsy bare-knuckle fighting and applied for the Getty Grant [for Editorial Photography] way back in 2007. Unfortunately for me I got the grant - you apply for these things but never imagine winning them. I was given nine months to complete the story. I can't even begin to explain how tough it was to try and gain access to this closed-off community. Patience and gentle persistence began to open doors but it has been a long and arduous process."

But in 2010 Maguire started shooting video using the Canon EOS 5D Mk II camera. "I felt that the people, the situations, just had too much texture for stills to fully capture and convey to an audience but I didn't know what to do with the footage; I thought perhaps some form of multimedia," he says. Eventually he showed some rushes to a professional film editor, who "was amazed at what I had and convinced me I should





shoot a documentary film," which received a commission for More4, a British cable network, in early 2011.

Now, the project has changed form once again, but this time in its focus. "When I originally set out to make the film, I was attracted by the violence of my two main characters, who are strong macho men. Their kids were kind of too young to make much of an impression on me, two or three years ago," he says. But, over the last seven months, Maguire has been spending a lot more time with his subjects. "That's when I started to see that the kids are the real characters. Their fathers tell their kids these stories about fights. These are myths and legends. And the kids are just in awe of this. They soak it up like a sponge and you just see how it's perpetuating the cycle of lies."

Living with these families, Maguire built up a strong relationship with one of the kids. "He would come every morning in my van, wake me up in his pyjamas to have a chat. You sort of fall in love with him. You see him do things that a child ought to do, but he's sort of forced into this world and you really hope and pray that he won't become like his father and grandfather – these nasty tyrants. The film effectively takes you on this journey with him and you hope that he will

be able to stay a kid a bit longer. But, by the end of the film, you see him die metaphorically. You see that he has no hope – he's going to become like his father."

The film was originally commissioned by More4, but when Maguire showed the rushes to his producers, "they were so excited that they offered for Channel 4 to show it instead. When you think about it – More4 can reach 700,000 viewers, while Channel 4 regularly has more than eight million – Channel 4 has the potential to bring a lot of people."

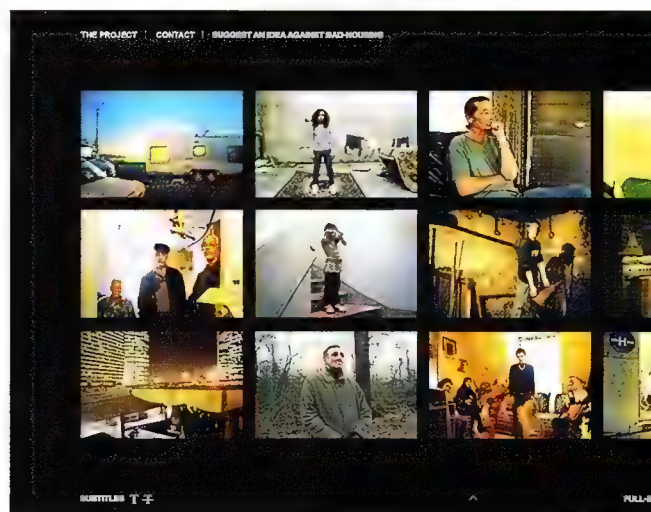
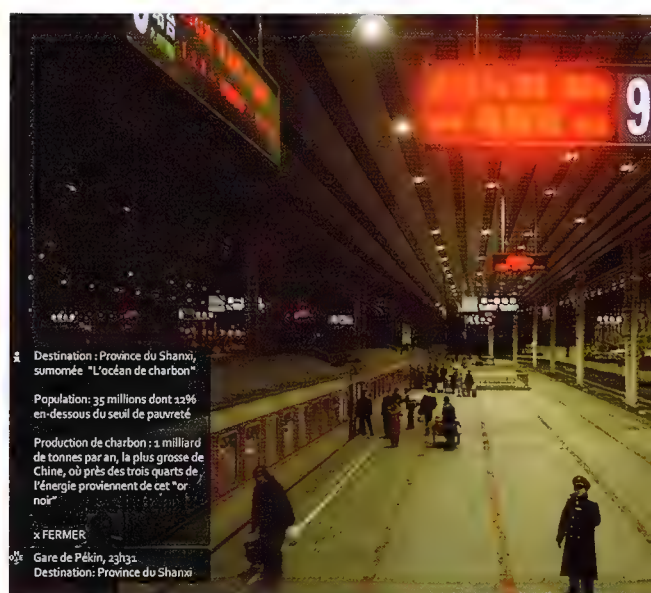
The documentary premiered last month under the name *True Stories: Gypsy Blood*, but up until the last moment, Maguire was working on filming cut scenes and fine-tuning everything. "There were massive challenges," explains Maguire, who, up until a year ago, had no film experience. "As a photographer, I'm so used to moving around. That doesn't matter when you're taking stills, but you can't do that with video. You want to get different angles, but it just doesn't work. Some of my early stuff, I look back and I'm cringing – I say to myself, 'Stay still, don't do this.' So, when you're filming, you also have to pick up these cut-aways. You have to listen carefully to what's happening in a scene and make a mental note to pick up other shots.

When you watch documentaries on TV, you sort of believe that they shot it chronologically, but that's not the case."

To help adjust to the art of filmmaking, Maguire received a day's training with a cinematographer. "He taught me a lot. I had never worked as a cameraman before, so watching how they move and how they pick up their shots was so useful. But I guess what was so hard to learn is how key audio is. In photography, the frame is your content. But in film, your content is the frame. Effectively, you need to be listening to audio. You need to hear the conversation, even if somebody is off camera or walking off, you have to start editing it in your head. You have to learn about the narrative."

Despite these early challenges, Maguire says that *Bloodlines* was a great learning experience, "and I would hope it made me a better photographer". And while he continues to be one, he admits that he'll be filming again soon. "I'm a photographer, but I find it to be quite a lonely existence. You're working solely on your own. But in film, you're using so many different people. You have executive producers, producers, sound engineers. They are all coming together. It's a collective effort to make something fantastic. It's invigorating." BJP





www.samuel-bollendorff.com

"Each time I've directed a documentary, it was because I felt photography alone couldn't convey the stories I wanted to tell," says Samuel Bollendorff. "I don't necessarily believe that one medium is more powerful than the other, but I do believe that an image needs context."

The Frenchman has made his name producing web documentaries that often mash up still images with audio, video and text, and in 2008 one of his multimedia pieces was the first to feature on *Le Monde's* website. It had a profound effect on his peers but, he says, it wasn't new for him. "I've always tried to integrate text into my images. My parents are psychoanalysts so the act of speaking is important. My job is to transmit words and ideas."

When the now defunct Paris-based photography agency Oeil Public launched its website a decade ago, Bollendorff, a co-founder, made sure that the photographers' images couldn't be seen with their captions. "That was very important to me," he says. "I didn't want our images to be disassociated from their context."

So you didn't have to click to reveal the captions, they were part of the website's design." But once he'd sold his images, Bollendorff couldn't do much to prevent his captions from being dismissed. "I realised that my images became illustrations. They didn't really serve the purpose I had given them in the first place." That's when he started producing projects that would integrate the written story within the images.

"When I worked on my project on AIDS, I decided to do portraits of people that would carry a large black banner with some text – the words of these people." The series, which was shot in Malawi, Uganda, Brazil and Russia, contained 32 images – each one of them representing one part of Bollendorff's overall narrative. "That forced me to think more about the story I was trying to tell, but it also forced newspapers and magazines to publish the images with the text. And since these were portraits, my images couldn't just be illustrations. They were the actual story. It allowed me to regain space within newspapers and magazines – and be published across six, eight or 10 pages."

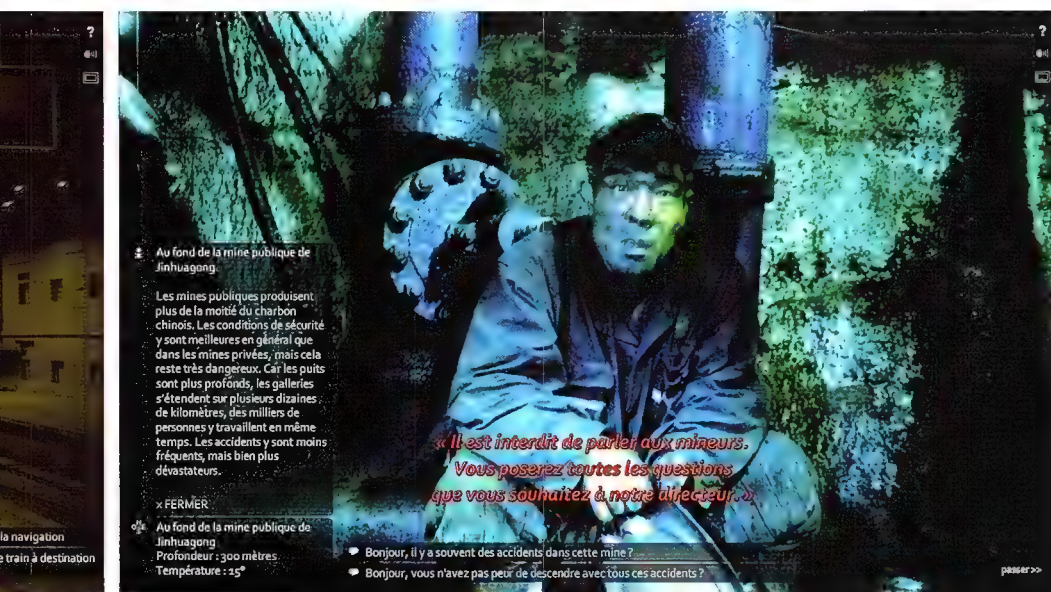
Bollendorff's first documentary – a 52-minute report on the geriatric section of

a hospital – was produced in 1998 after the photographer spent three months shooting just still images. "I was happy with the results, but one day, one of the residents died – that's when I realised that a lot of what I had shared with that person wasn't in my images. I decided I'd come back to the hospital, with a video camera. I realised that what was missing was speech."

Now Bollendorff is trying to bring all of his experience with photography, videography and audio to tell stories on the internet through web documentaries. *Journey to the End of Coal* produced with Honkytonk Films is his most popular work – with more than 300,000 viewers. The interactive documentary follows Chinese coal miners who are risking their lives to satisfy their country's economic aspirations.

"Right from the start, we knew we needed to write a script," he says. "That script is the reconstruction of your investigation in a particular subject matter. You need to know who you are going to talk to and what you will include. You also need to think about how you will integrate your captions into your images and online." But that's not enough, says Bollendorff. "You also need some sort of guidance for your





Despite his extensive work with moving images, Samuel Bollendorff is primarily a photographer, and for *Nowhere Safe* [below left] he used the medium to create a linear but interactive 40-minute documentary that rivals his video work. *Journey to the End of Coal* [left] has defined the web documentary genre in France and introduced Samuel Bollendorff to the world of interactive story-telling. Images © Samuel Bollendorff.



viewers. You can't produce something that will be complicated to navigate. That's when I came up with the idea of using – in design terms – a video-game interface with a series of familiar buttons at the bottom of the computer screen. It means that when you see it for the first time, you know how it works. You recognise the interface."

This is essential, he asserts. "You can't use the techniques and codes of another medium, such as television, when you're working on the web. When I see slideshows in which photographers provide a voiceover, I find it horrendous. It doesn't work. You can't do that on the web – it reminds you too much of television when web users are actually trying to escape that medium."

With each web documentary, Bollendorff tries to do something different. For *Rapporteur de Crise*, which looks at the European Parliament, the photographer chose a more linear narrative. "It's 26 minutes of video that offers opportunities to click to find out about a subject." Bollendorff chose to do away with photography for that work. "It's about the European Parliament, which is already a pretty boring subject, so we thought that if we had done it with photos, people would be bored out of their minds."

But Bollendorff isn't leaving photography entirely behind – quite the contrary, as he believes that his best web documentary is *Nowhere Safe*, a 40-minute video made only of still images. "The documentary is made up of 16 portraits of up to four minutes," he says. "On the web, the narrative is simpler than other works as there's a sort of global linearity to the work. We've even added a button – 'I don't want to click' – for people who just wanted to look at the entire documentary in one go.

"There's a real dialogue between photography and audio, which has allowed us to push the boundaries in terms of narrative; because I was able to go back to film photography, and also because it allowed me to work with very few images in some cases. For example, there's one portrait of a man that lasts four minutes." It's probably the longest online portrait, he says, laughing. "It's a very long zoom into this guy's face. But it works, because the audio draws people in. It makes people pay attention. It allows you to bring in elements to contextualise the photo, while the audio tells you this guy's story. It allows you to focus on this guy's voice, the fragility of his tone, and so on. But also the fact it

is not a video allows you to convey the emotional state of this man without showing him in a vulnerable state. A video of that same monologue would have been too cruel and voyeuristic."

For Bollendorff, too many photographers are scared of letting an image stand still on a computer screen. "They feel they need to give it movement, even if that means they will end up with something that reminds you more of a screensaver than anything else. Or they will put 40 images when actually only 20 of those are good. It's a catastrophe. We shouldn't be afraid of taking our time with our images."

Bollendorff continues to work with video, but he's looking for new ways of telling stories. "I'm starting to ask myself if I shouldn't be recording my material during my initial investigation, and then reconstruct it afterwards," he says. "That would be a sort of creative documentary. It would take us away from direct testimonies and the so-called objectivity that doesn't really exist anyway. Why not assume that fact right from the start? It's another way to tell a story – it's not pure fiction and not pure documentary."

For now, he's still undecided, but excited by the prospect. "I need to try things out." *BJP*



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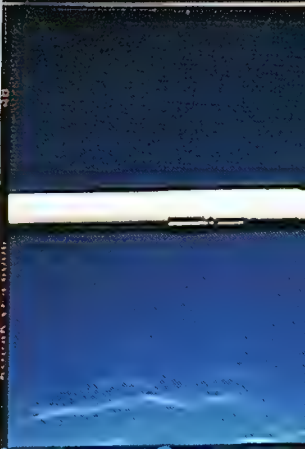
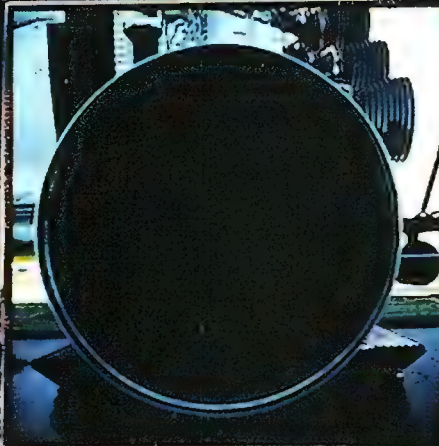
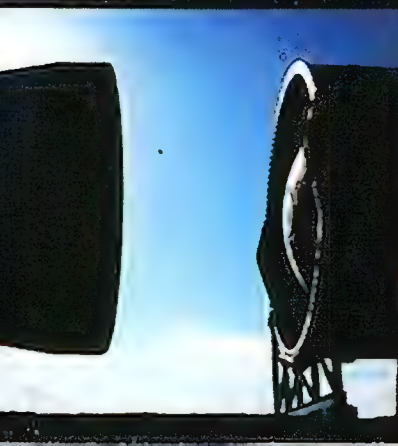
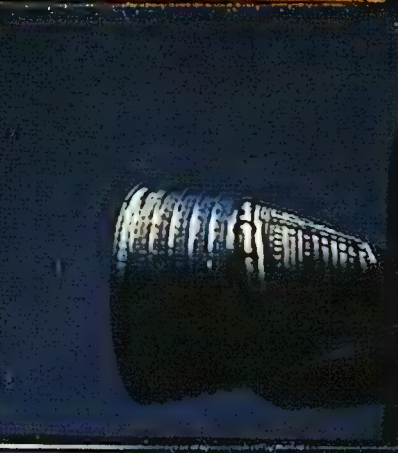
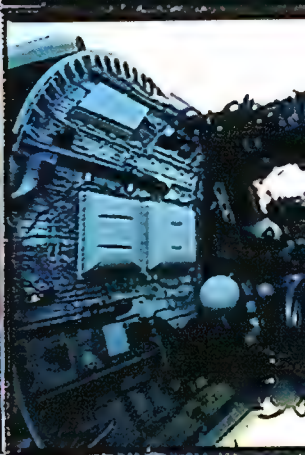
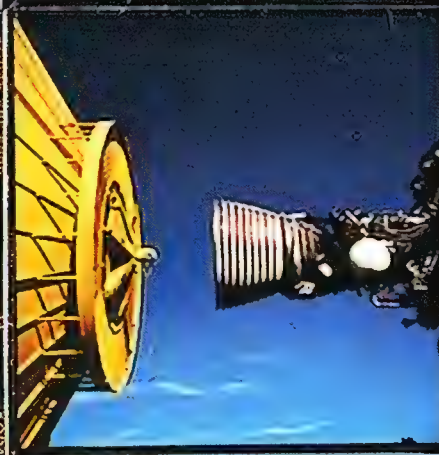
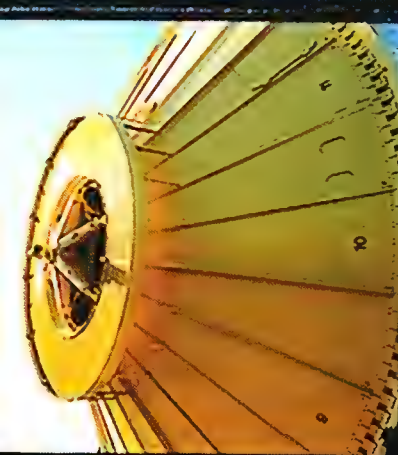
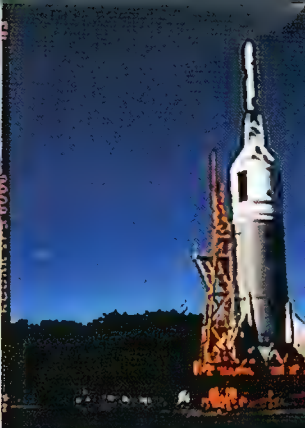
# AMERICAN ROAD MOVIE

Steve Pyke began making photographs while ferrying cars across the US, returning 25 years later at the pinnacle of his career to fill the vacancy at *The New Yorker* left by Richard Avedon. **Peter Hamilton** traces his rise, and talks to the photographer about his ongoing obsessions with the American moon programme and philosophers, and his long association with the cinema.

1 Cape Canaveral Launch  
(John Glenn) 1998.









The life of Steve Pyke, who is one of our most illustrious exports to the US, reads like the script for a biopic. It encompasses such diverse experiences as factory work, circuses, motorbike racing, the punk music scene, and a long relationship with philosophy. His circle of friends and acquaintances ranges from The Pogues to Peter Greenaway and Karl Popper (perhaps the most important Western thinker of the last century, although some of his philosopher friends would probably not agree). And when Richard Avedon died in 2004, who did *The New Yorker* magazine ask to take his place as its editorial portraitist but Steve Pyke. Yet, with his typical frankness, Pyke is first to admit that, "You don't 'replace' Avedon... I didn't feel like that at all. I just felt 'I've got to get my stuff into bags, go to New York, find myself an apartment...' It was a difficult time."

Pyke has amassed enough experience in the last half-century to make several full-length films, so it might seem odd that it should take so long for one to appear – particularly as he has been involved in film-making since 1979. Released last year, *Moonbug* has already won a best film award, and collected prizes for its music, composed by Pyke's old friend, Matt Johnson of The The. It re-tells the story of how Pyke made portraits of most of the US moon programme astronauts, and of the artefacts [3-4] that are the surviving relics of that historical moment.

The film, however, took 13 years to make. It is a collaboration with the director Nichola Bruce, Pyke's partner for 24 years and mother of their two sons. The film project survived despite the break-up of their relationship in the early 2000s, and is all the more poignant for it, for *Moonbug* also documents a period of close and shared creative expression in their lives. We see them working together to make the film, a relationship that threads itself in a sub-plot to what is presented as a road movie. It is the tale of Pyke's quest – one that was about meeting and photographing the surviving moon men before time had taken its inevitable toll on them. The film concentrates on his portrait sessions and the conversations between sitter and photographer that recount their memories of the great events that eventually took the first man to the moon in 1969 – although it is ironic that Neil Armstrong should have been the only survivor to have refused (so far) to be photographed by Pyke.

### Cinematic influences

Pyke has devoted more than 30 years of his life to making still portraits of an extraordinary range of people, but his involvement with cinema is less well known, although it began very early in his remarkable career. By the early 1980s, he'd become a regular contributor of pop musician portraits to both *The Face* and *NME*, and carved out a distinctive style. Indeed, his trademark approach, using a Rolleiflex with close-up lenses, came about during an early project on film directors – typically enough for Pyke, a self-assignment.

His lifelong fascination with cinema motivated Pyke to begin a new project on film directors in 1980 (his first subject being Derek Jarman [5]), and by 1983 he was in Edinburgh to photograph the American director Sam Fuller at a festival. He'd been using a Rolleiflex 6×6cm for much of this work, but wanted to give it more impact. His Eureka discovery in a camera shop of the Rolleinar lenses that clip on the twin lens reflex allowed him to make a powerful and up-close portrait of Fuller [6] that day, and the die was cast. Despite forays into 35mm and large format, the square negative of the Rolleiflex has remained his central vehicle of photographic expression, a gift so honed and economical that by now he usually knows whether he has a good a portrait by the time



3

- 2 Cape Canaveral Rockets, Houston, 1998.
- 3 Lunar Rock Sample, Houston, 1998.
- 4 Hammer, one of the artefacts from the US moon programme.



4



5 *Derek Jarman, London, 1983.*6 *Sam Fuller, Edinburgh, 1983.*

5

6

he's exposed as few as six or seven frames. "I never shoot more than two rolls of any sitter."

"Cinema as another way of seeing the world is a big love of mine," says Pyke. "My interest in directors came out of this. I think of them as like alchemists, exploring time, light, movement and emotions." His encounter with Peter Greenaway in 1979 was a seminal moment in the development of his photographic style. "I was working as a props man on *The Draughtsman's Contract*. The great thing that came out of that was meeting Sacha Vierny, who'd been Alain Resnais' lighting cameraman on both *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *Last Year at Marienbad*. He had this amazing sense of composition; it was a really big influence on me." Pyke absorbed as much as he could of what Vierny – who used to say that he never used a viewfinder or a light meter – was doing. The drawing grid used by 17th-century painters such as Vermeer is part of the plot of the film as well as the framework for the film's masterful compositions, and Pyke says now that this device and the sense of balance that it gave to an image was a turning point in his understanding of how to make a picture.

After making *The Draughtsman's Contract*, Vierny became Greenaway's "house cinematographer" for his 1980s and 90s films, while Pyke took up the role of photographer, providing film stills for promotion, and even pictures used in the films themselves. In *The Belly of an Architect*, Pyke's pictures form an exhibition that is part of the story of the film. "I made these pictures of the statues and fountains of Rome. I'd just discovered Atget in a big way, and I was trying to get the feel

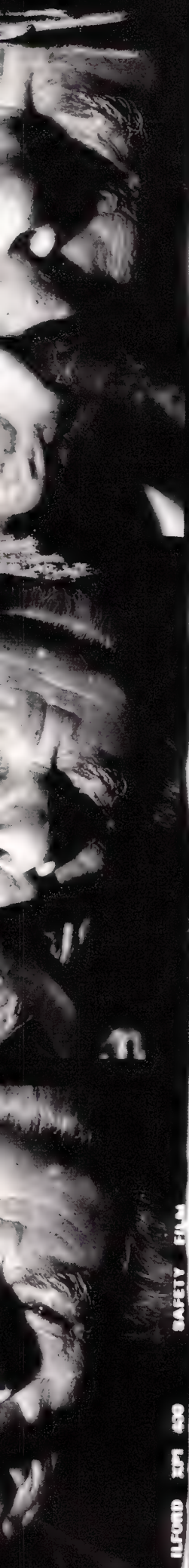
of what he'd been doing into my photographs." It is evident that Pyke benefited from a creative involvement with the Greenaway films that worked in both directions. These are "art films" in the fullest sense of the term; Greenaway was very much influenced by the art of the Renaissance and Baroque periods and especially by the compositions, richness of detail and moral themes of Flemish painting in particular. More recently Pyke's portraits formed a central element of the story in the Mike Nichols version of Patrick Marber's drama, *Closer*, where Julia Roberts is cast as the photographer. In both cases, Pyke's collaborations with the film directors have also involved stories that turn on photography's relationship with time, memory and history.

### Escape to New York

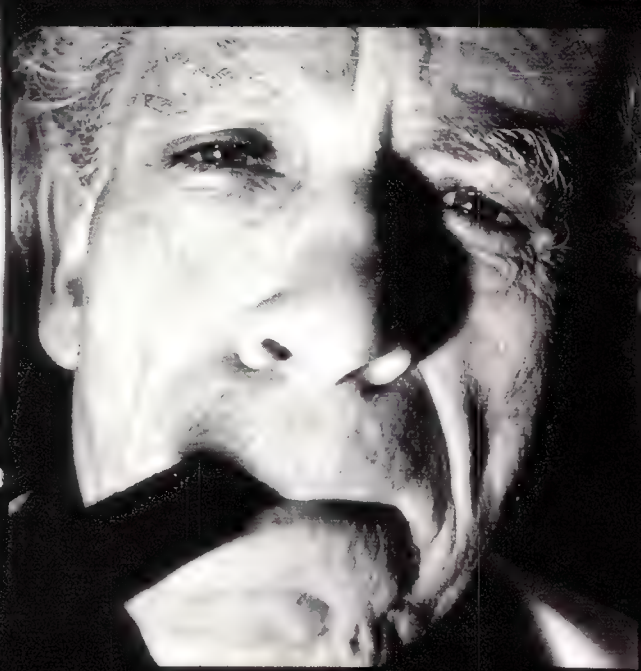
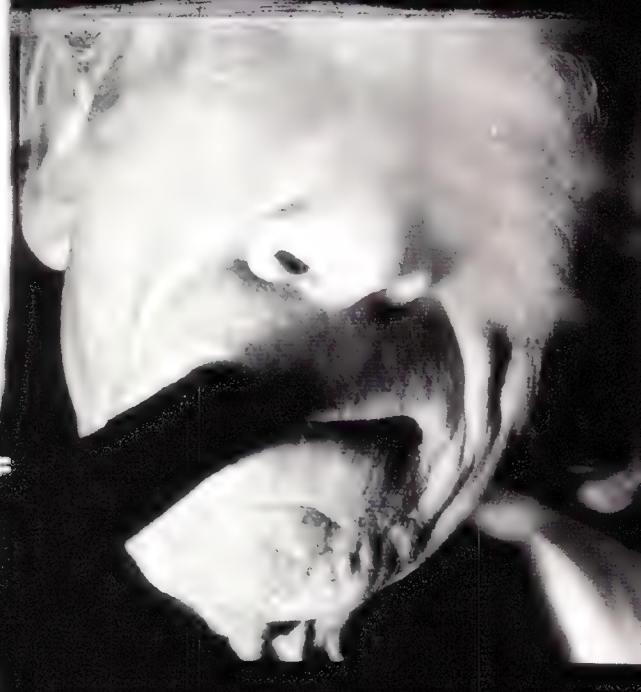
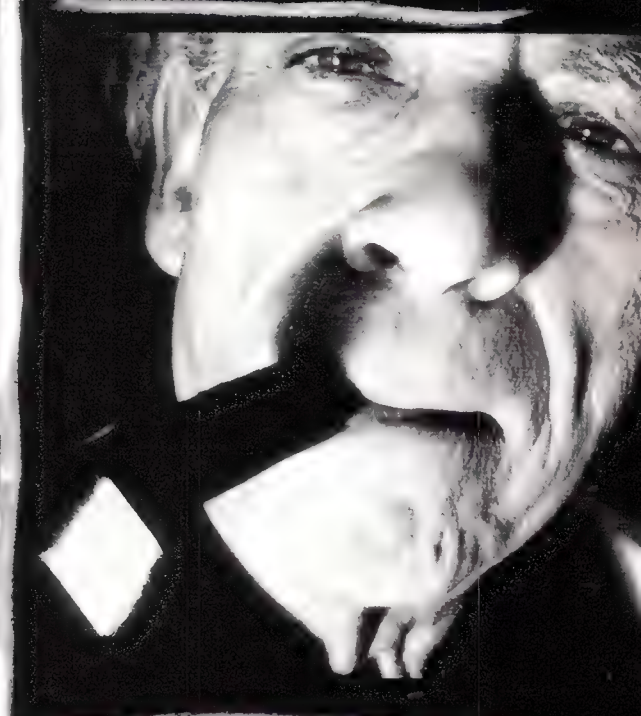
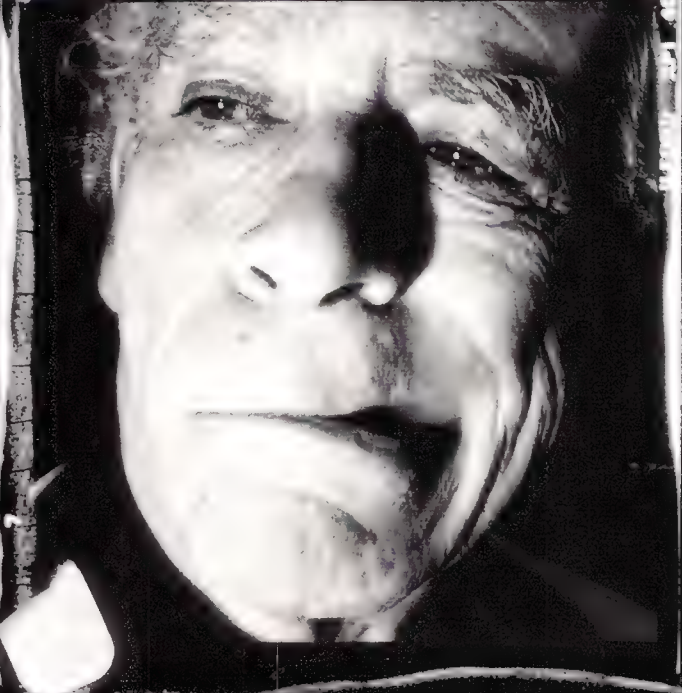
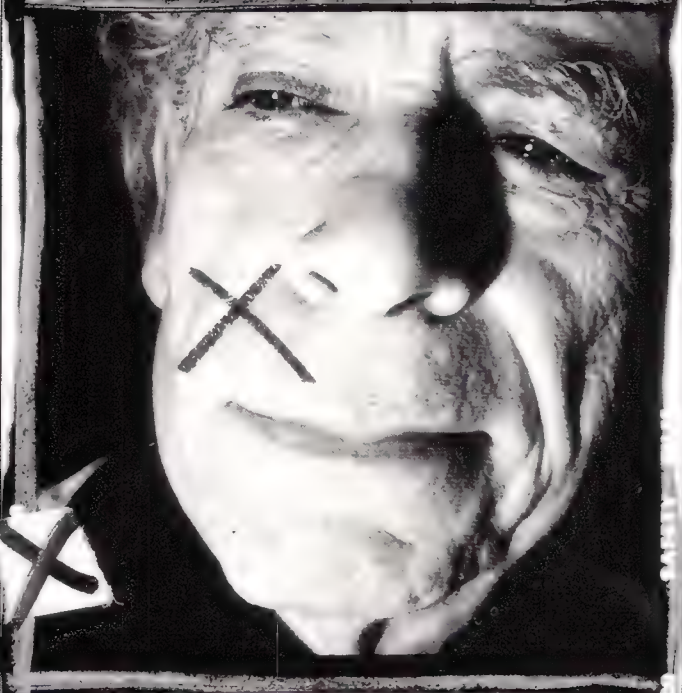
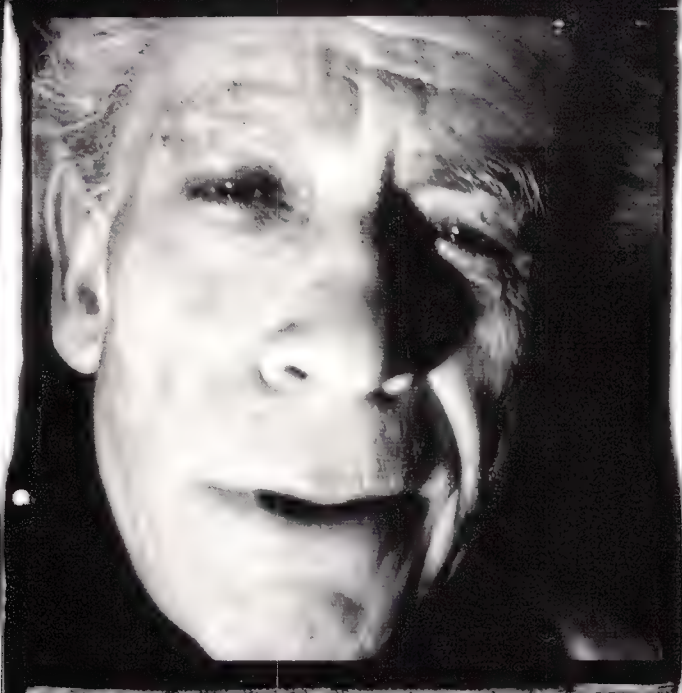
Although time and memory are central to understanding his work, the filmic dimension of Pyke's aesthetic was evident – if you knew where to look for it – from the very beginning. Despite, as he says, "being expected to work in factories" in Leicester, he found his own way as a teenager. He built and raced motorbikes until, at the age of 19, he'd had one too many bad accidents and, during one shocking weekend, lost two friends. "I'd sold them bikes I built," he says. "I couldn't get my head around it – I'd sold them the bikes they were killed on."

"I got into the punk scene and ran off to London. Then New York; I really ran there to get away from Leicester. But I also felt America was always in my history – through film and TV. I went down to a travel agency and bought a Jetsave ticket for





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7 *Fragments, 1985-1987.*8 *Peter Greenaway, Edinburgh, 1982.*9 *Montana USA, 1977.*

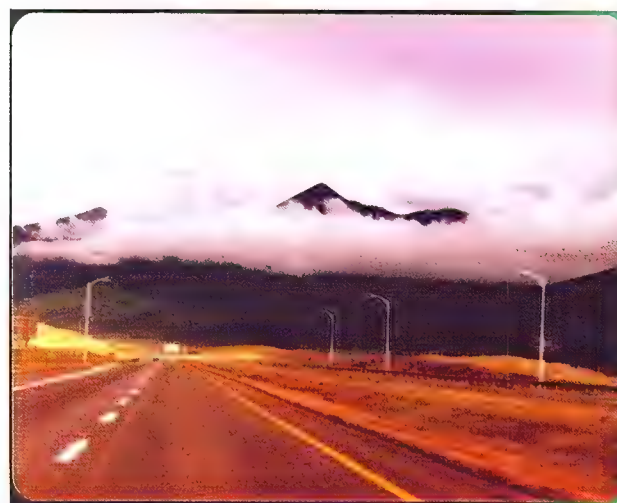
£119, and bumped in an open ticket on a Greyhound bus for \$50 extra." So began his first American road trip in 1976. It led to a job that saw him ferrying cars from Vancouver to Toronto for a company that hired out vehicles for fly drives. "Old people would drive from one side of the States to the other to visit relatives, then fly home. Then we'd take the cars back again. But God knows what was in the cars! I can't believe so many people wanted to visit relatives..."

It was during this time that Pyke started to make his first photographs of the road on which he was driving, a lot of it through the Rockies. "The border drive through Detroit, Sioux Falls, Rapid City - Route 90 - it was like a totally different country. We'd drive through Sioux Falls and there was an old sign, nothing official, something somebody had put up in the 1930s, which said 'Indian War Grave'. I must have passed it 10 or 15 times, then one day I thought, 'I must see this'. There was no path or anything. You just walk through a wood and then suddenly you look down and there's this small wooden box saying, 'Union soldier killed here in 1876'. It was so interesting to be part of that, part of how quickly history is changing."

This fascination with time passing, with the need to fix the feelings and impressions of that moment is a common motivation for many photographers. But you can't help feeling that, in Pyke's case, the tragic background for his presence in America played its part. Mortality is an inevitable aspect of this. Reflecting on a much more recent project to photograph the mummified remains of Mexicans who had died during a cholera outbreak in the 1830s, Pyke was frank about his own motivation for this. "I had photographed relics and mummified bodies in Spain, Italy and Portugal over the years. There is always something that fascinates me about the human form. In death it is particularly interesting. The physical body remains behind for a short time, but all sense of the character of that person has left. Death is something that comes to all of us, but it's rare to witness the human form like this. These figures are almost 200 years old, and yet still have remarkable distinctive facial features. Photography had barely been invented when they passed away, and yet if they had

been photographed I'm sure they would still be recognisable." What he experienced in North America in 1976 took him into photography. He understood it, then as now, as a medium that can fix time into infinitesimal slices of "embedded reality".

His memories of that first American road trip are what he calls "pictures that you remember even before you had a camera". But he wanted to convert the road movie unfolding in front of him into tangible images. To begin with, these were Instamatic camera photos. Then he started to experiment with making a series of hand-coloured Xerox copies of the prints. Later they would be part of a portfolio he'd take to the Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster) when he applied to join the photography course there, but he was turned down and told he should think instead about learning to be a darkroom worker. The London College of Printing proved more amenable, but by then he was already becoming established as an editorial photographer and juggled his college course with assignments for *The Face* and other magazines at the start of the 1980s.



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Pyke's early pictures formed parts of composites, assemblages of pictures that recount what he would later call "acts of memory". Throughout his career he has regularly made series of collages out of contact prints that express the passing of time for him. These filmic constructions have an interesting relationship with cinema. The latter is a medium that can play with time to create its effects, but of course time itself has only one direction. Film may be able to generate the illusion of a different time to that we experience, but still photography can only offer tiny slices of the time that it captures. It is both precise and ephemeral at the same moment – a moment that can suggest or express something more lasting, but can never re-create it. The composites are pictures that have to be read as a sort of story. The passage of time through the composite can be short or long, as shown the montages he has made of his portraits of his sons, Jack and Duncan, since their births.

These acts of memory, as he terms them, are part of a wider group of multiple images. Pyke's triptychs, diptychs, collages and other assembled works seek to overcome the limits of the camera eye, and its fixed perspective or viewpoint. They present a visualisation of the world far richer in both time and space than a single photograph can achieve.

### Acts of memory

It will be obvious that what might be called his obsession with the photograph as a fragment of memory has run through Pyke's work since the start. "As you get older, your photos come to define certain moments in time; you are not aware of it at the time, but they really capture a moment. It is all about memory." This aspect of the medium was something Pyke was already exploring in the 16mm films he was making with Nichola Bruce and Mike Coulson between 1980 and 1982.

The second of these was based on found images, little slices of memory that had been rejected by their temporary owners. "I became fascinated by the pictures discarded in photo booths, so I collected thousands of them, and we made a film by shooting them under a rostrum camera, *Photo Photo Photo*, which was shown that year at the Edinburgh Film Festival."

If time and mortality provide the drive behind why Pyke has sought out his subject matter, there is another dimension to it that should also be considered. The scope of his portrait work is encyclopaedic, where the great and the good rub shoulders with ordinary people, but also with some of those who you might not want to meet, such as General Pinochet, whom he photographed for *The New Yorker* in 1998.

"John Lee Anderson, a journalist who knew him, told me, 'He will just walk into the room, he won't even shake your hand.' My worry was I might have to shake his hand. He was a mass murderer. I had two friends who lost their brothers, both Chileans, part of the 'disappeared'. So I didn't want to shake his hand. John also said, 'He never looks me in the eye.'"

"So Pinochet walks in, looked me in the eye and said, 'I want to shake the hand of the man who photographed Bill Gates.' He was completely obsessed with Gates' power and money. Completely mad – I was transfixed by him."

Pyke found himself obliged to shake Pinochet's hand. "I had to. But I was completely aware all through the shoot of what was in front of me. I had also Henry Kissinger [former National Security Advisor and Secretary of State for the US between 1969 and 1977], who was equally involved in mass murder. There's a different place you can be in, in that situation. You are not just capturing a likeness. You can make something that indicates where you are with that person."

Pyke's best-known portrait work has sought to provide

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10 Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet poses for a portrait shoot with Pyke in London.

11 President Chavez, New York, 2006.

12 Bill Gates, London, 1992.

13 Robert Altman, London, 1993.

14 Peter Cook, London, 1997.

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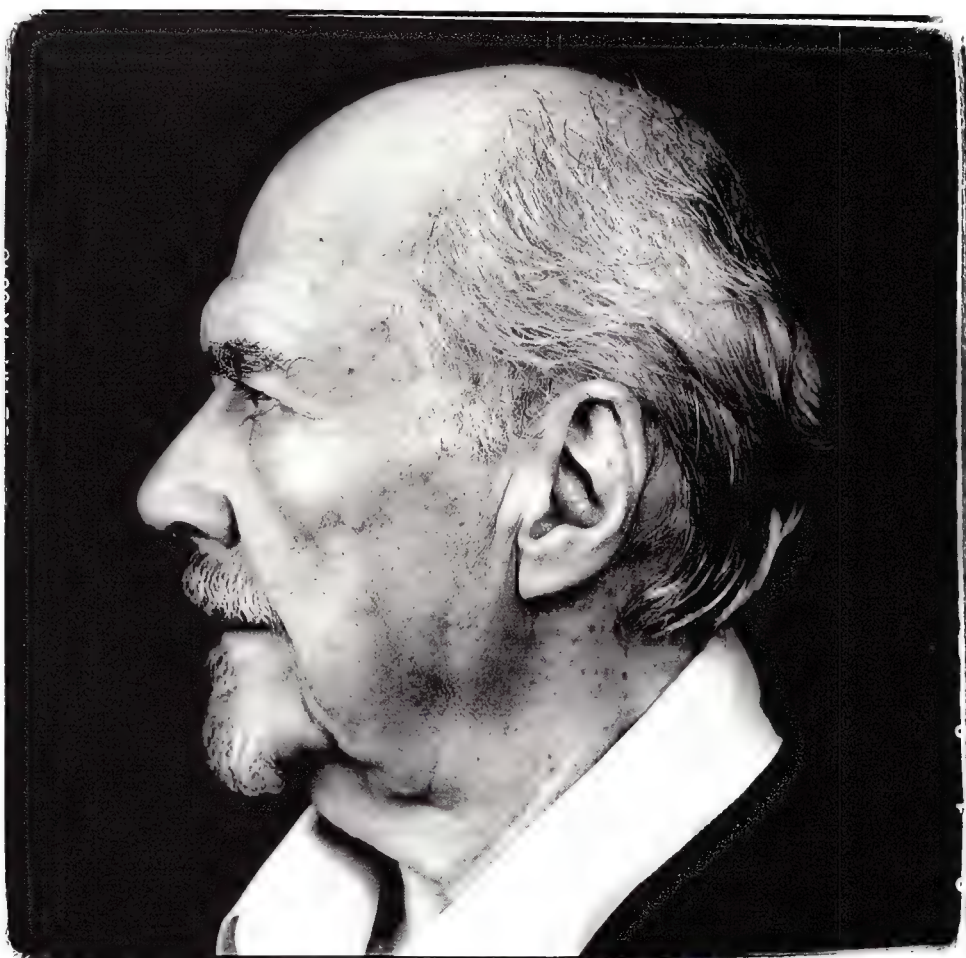
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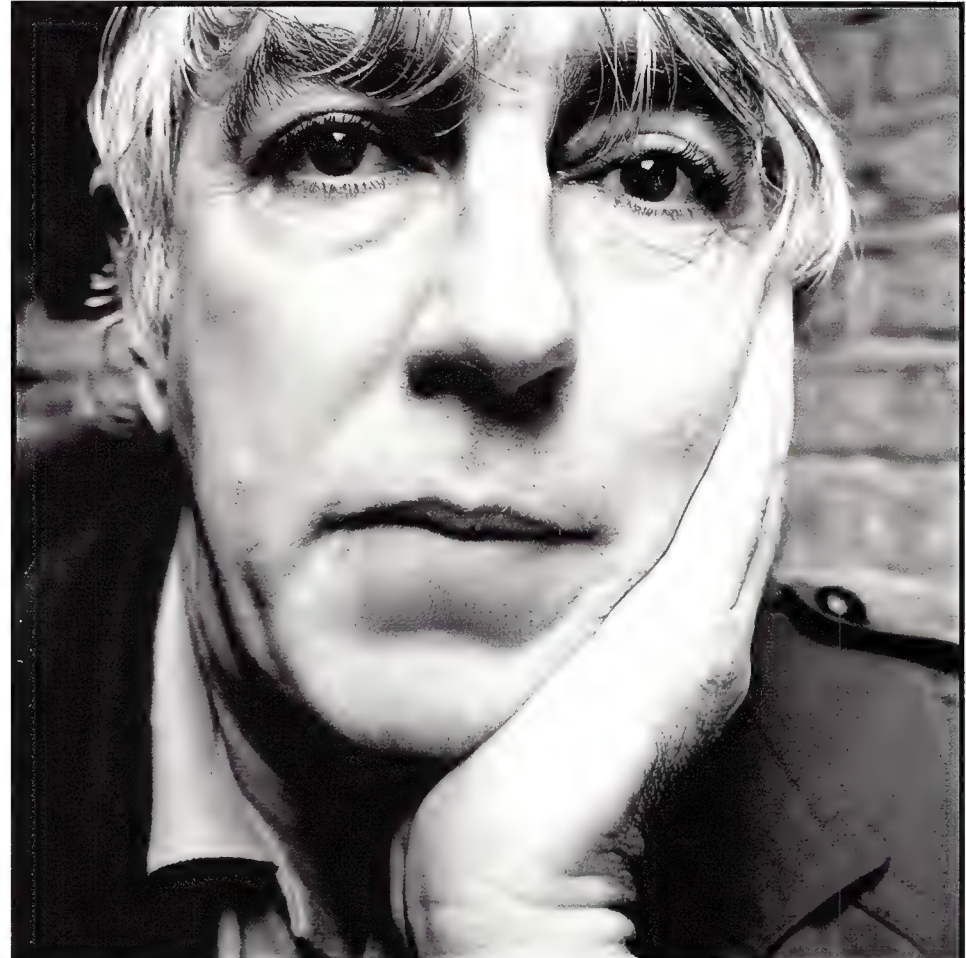




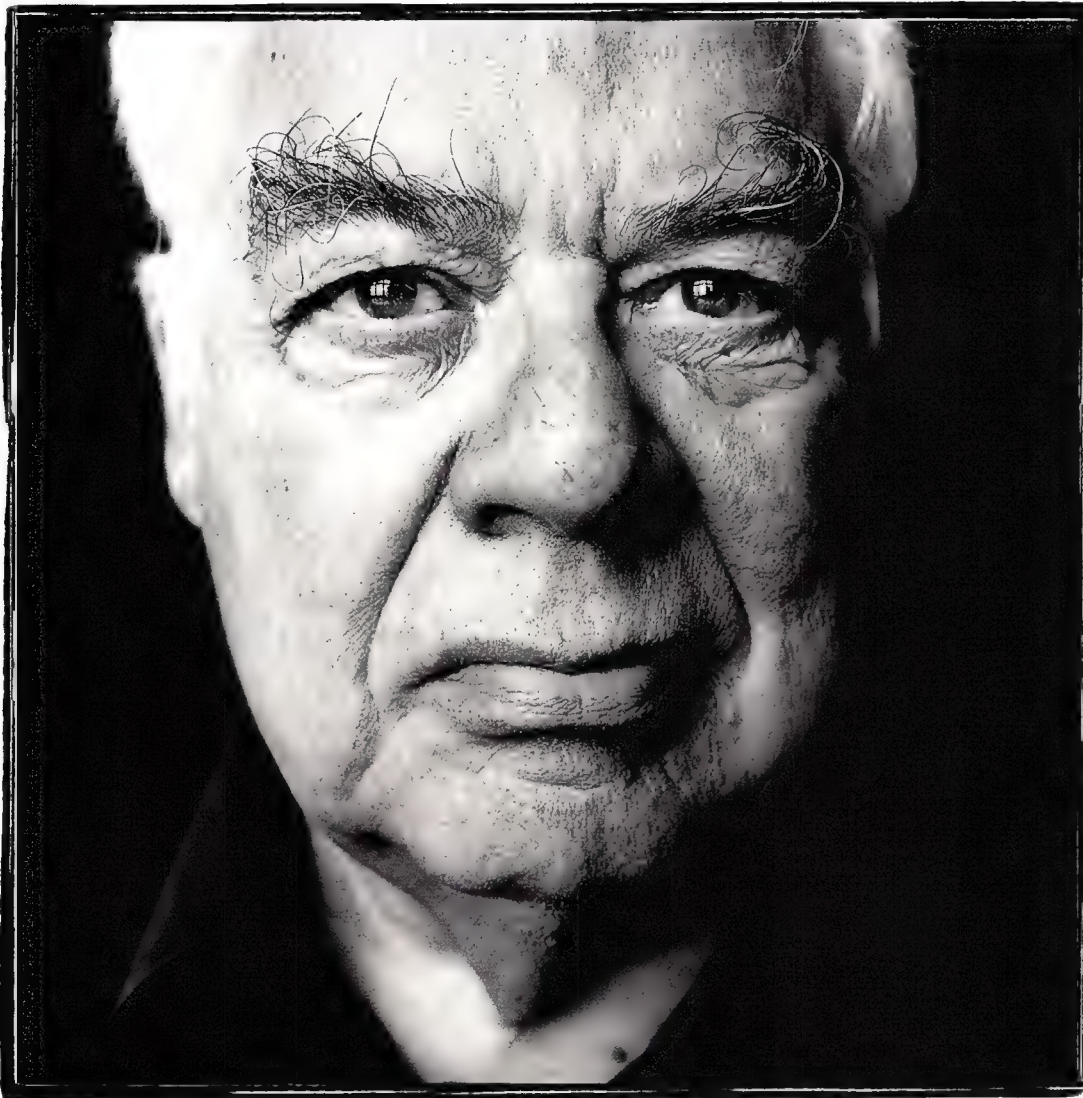
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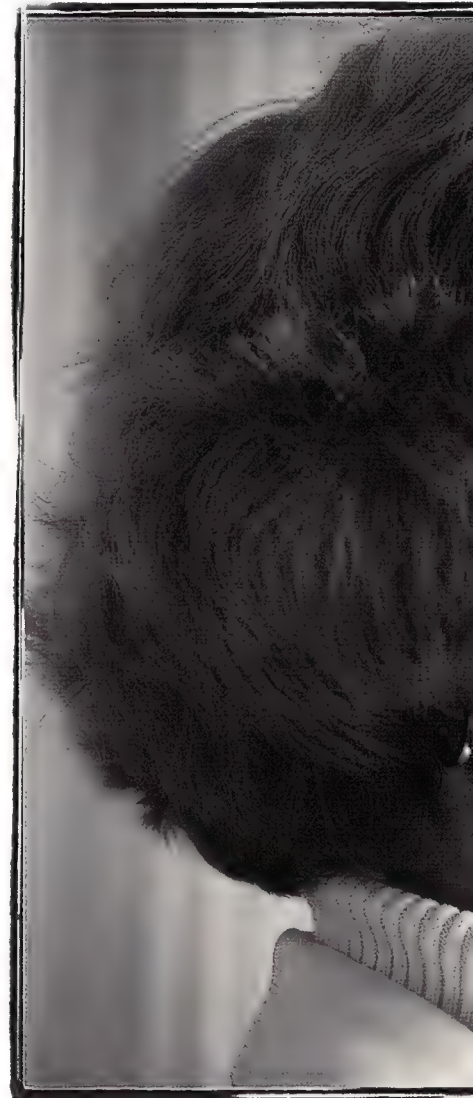
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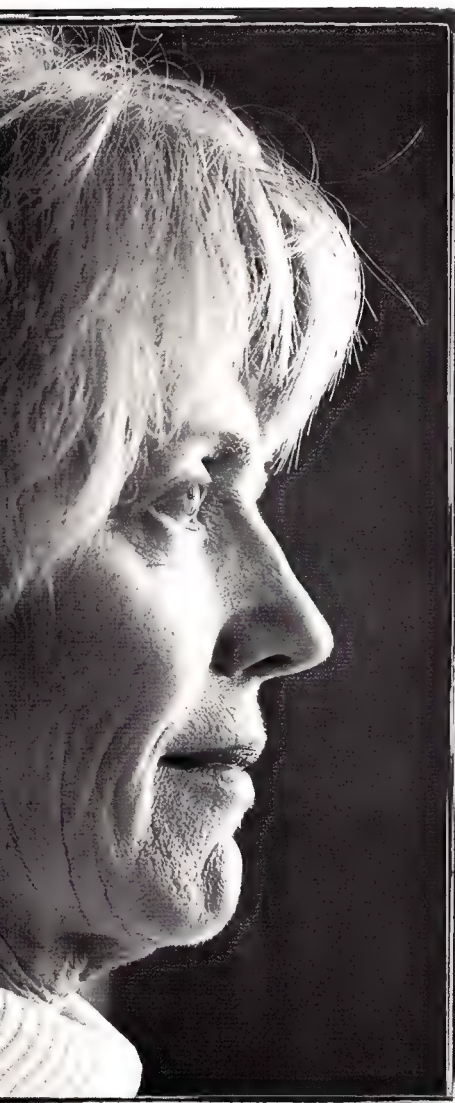
a conspectus of what he terms “faces of our time”, to record those who have made a contribution to the history of the age. Although many of those photographed would admit (some with reluctance, others with delight) to the appellation “celebrity”, Pyke’s approach makes no concession to such a meretricious notion. They are recorded with exactly the same care as that devoted to those whose names will never figure in either the tabloids or *Who’s Who*, the unremembered, ordinary folk who survived wars, scratched livings from the street, or put on their uniforms with pride so that they could be immortalised on the film wound through an old Rolleiflex. And the corpus contains not just portraits of people, but pictures of just about everything that might also offer clues to their identities: personal possessions, clothing, tools, objects, furniture, houses – the list is almost endless. Pyke, in fact, has been photographing the soles of his own shoes for the last three decades – a project he calls “25 years of walking”.

As a result, the imposing body of work assembled through this undertaking begins to look a little like one of those rooms created by a 17th-century antiquary – a cabinet of curiosities. While you may not find a narwhal’s tusk or a unicorn’s horn among these pictures, there are curiosities aplenty (and quite a few examples of roadkill). His archive resembles a personal Pitt Rivers Museum, all of the images collected with the same care and attention and without regard to the prestige

or otherwise of what has been recorded. Putting the world (or Pyke’s world) into a vast system of visual classification is simple description of this rich and diverse enterprise. Pyke is not alone in having such an urge to collect and classify. August Sander’s great project of portrait and typological collection also comes to mind, and it is not therefore surprising that Pyke always mentions the great German photographer as one of the giants on whose shoulders he has stood.

Further evidence that this great project of classification continues was provided by the fact that the appearance of *Moonbug* coincided with the publication of the latest instalment of another long-term project. In 1986 Pyke made a portrait of the Caribbean writer CLR James. His conversations with James, and a little later with the philosopher Freddie Ayer, inspired him to begin a series, *Philosophers* [15-17], which now counts more than 250 subjects. The first book of these portraits, published by Cornerhouse in 1990, included 78 names. The latest, published in an edition that does not match up in print quality to its predecessor, numbers another 107. Some of these are students of students of those photographed for the first volume. Now more familiar with the breed, Pyke was less in awe of them than he had been a quarter century earlier. “There was certain reverence,” he says. “I think the new-found identification has ultimately changed the portraits and made the subjects perhaps seem less of a mystery. To some





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extent, this can be seen in all my portraiture now."

Pyke's self-assessment is typically honest. The latest batch of philosophers (apart from a few names who command a larger audience) are mainly professionals in an academic trade, and generally look a bit younger. The big names – who are also older – photograph better. But there has been a generational shift. Many of the big names of the 1980s were Cold War soldiers – some of them emigrés from fascism or communism – and their generation has now all but disappeared. They photographed brilliantly, and Pyke was probably sufficiently in awe of them to make more monumental portraits. But whereas there was a certain panache and possibly a harsher vision evident in Pyke's earlier portraits of the younger philosophers in 1989, the latest crop receive a more sympathetic treatment.

"Most of the time when I photograph someone now, it's a conversation you are having and that is more important than the photography. The photograph is a testimony to the meeting. I never run out of time to make the picture. But I have a conversation for 45-50 minutes. And I think, 'Oh yeah, we should do this now, take the picture.' And I take six or seven frames, sometimes a couple of rolls. There's a sense of confidence now about what's going on that makes for something more relaxed."

Some of this sense of confidence that is now a part of

Pyke's world view can also be seen in a film he made in 2010, in the grounds of Great Dixter not far from where he lived in Hastings before his move to New York in 2004. The film is called *Meadow*, and is a single long take of an English wild flower and grass meadow in late spring. It is beautiful and relaxing, a quiet ode to the beauty of the natural world, with the sound of skylarks and cuckoos and the breeze just audible as a soundtrack. And it makes perfect sense of his answer to my question, "Do you miss England?"

"I miss the countryside," he explains. "I miss the rural, the horizon on the sea. I miss the cathedrals, or walking into a 12th-century church ..."

For his *Los Muertos* photographs, Pyke has also written that, "Ultimately, I believe photography has to deal with our own mortality. As soon as we press the shutter, the image becomes a part of our past. When you make a photograph, whether it is a portrait or a still life, the end result becomes a symbol of what you saw, it is no longer the object you had attempted to represent. It has become a means created to extend our ways of seeing in our search for 'truth'." *BJP*

www.pyke-eye.com  
www.moonbugthefilm.com  
Philosophers is published by Oxford University Press (ISBN 978-0-199757-14-5),  
priced £25. ukcatalogue.oup.com  
Pyke's back catalogue is represented by Contour by Getty Images.  
www.contourbygettyimages.com

15 *Richard Rorty.*

16 *Patricia Churchland.*

17 *Tim Williamson, Oxford, 2003. All images © Steve Pyke, courtesy of Contour by Getty Images.*







## My Sentimental Archives

INTERVIEW BY OLIVIER LAURENT AND DIANE SMYTH.

"The aesthetics come from everything I love in the various media I've studied," says Nicolas Dhervillers, who attended courses in cinema and theatre before switching to photography. "I'm influenced by Samuel Beckett, but also by David Lynch and Stanley Kubrick. I've also learnt a lot from Philip-Lorca diCorcia and Jeff Wall – I love how they construct their images, and I've drawn a lot from how they talk about art."

The 30-year-old Frenchman fell in love with photography because it allowed him to create new worlds on his own, he says, rather than relying on assistants, directors, make-up artists and so on as in cinema. "I had more freedom with a still camera and this independence allowed me to express myself more clearly," he says. "But I don't see myself as a photographer. My ambition is to be an artist using photography as my main medium, and I use it to deconstruct the very simplistic view of reality."

*My Sentimental Archives* is Dhervillers' latest project, shot on a six-month residency in Sion in Switzerland. He went to a local council office to search its picture archive, picking out images of former residents in postcards, photographs and newspapers dating back to the 1840s. He then restored the images and included them in his shots of the contemporary Swiss landscape, investigating the country's photographic memory of itself and the nature of the photographic document. "These characters were probably no taller than one or two centimetres, and I had to restore them to add



them to landscapes measuring more than two metres," he says. "They emerge from the past, and discover a contemporary era. As a result, they are in a state of longing and discovery.

"Sometimes they find themselves in front of unexpected objects – I wanted each of my images to feature something from the 20th or 21st centuries, something that would not have existed in the characters' era. It brings a magical sense to the images because, while they might be completely made up, they look possible. My entire project works on this ambivalence, as well on its anachronistic nature."

Dhervillers' previous project, *Tourists*, used a similar idea, combining photographs of holidaymakers found online with dark, almost sinister landscapes he had shot himself. His images question the legitimacy of photography, he says, as well as concepts of intellectual property and the division between fact and fiction. "When I start working on an image, I often feel like I'm looking at a blank canvas, as a painter would," he says. "This makes me feel free. I'm studying the work of Coubet, Corot, Pissaro and Manet – who, by the way, freed themselves from historical painting thanks to photography."

Cinema still plays an integral role in Dhervillers' work though, because he creates his trademark dark aesthetic with an early cinematic technique called *Nuit Américaine*. "It was predominantly used in Hollywood in the early days when directors couldn't film at night," he says. "They would film their scenes in daylight and use filters to transpose them to night time in post-production. It's like a pact between the filmmaker and his audience – I like that idea, so I've taken it and adapted it to my work. My images are taken in broad daylight and converted to night in post-production. The light I use in my images is part of my writing, which links directly with the meaning of the word 'photography', to write with light." *BJP*

[www.nicolasdhervillers.com](http://www.nicolasdhervillers.com)











































# Better by Design

**Jörg Colberg** focuses on an overlooked aspect of the photobook, discussing the role of design in the making of five modern classics.

In the most basic terms, they are simply books made up of photographs, but of course there's much more to the photobook than that. Typically they are carefully edited and sequenced, and the selection of the photographs, and their order, are crucial to whatever story is being told. But there's another crucial element that's too often ignored – the design.

Over the past few decades, photobook design has become an integral part of telling the story. Classics such as Walker Evans' *American Photographs* used a very straightforward design: blank pages and picture pages alternating with very little text, if any. In contrast, contemporary photobooks have come to embrace the many different ways in which the design of a book – the graphic design as well as its actual physical properties – can help shape the message. The following books are some of the most striking examples I have come across.

## Broken Manual

Alec Soth became famous with *Sleeping By The Mississippi*, a book that followed the classic Evans model. In contrast, *Broken Manual* (published by Steidl, 2010) looks and feels like the “scripts” – transcripts of lectures – I used to buy at university. A soft cover [far right] that looks a bit grimy, even when brand new, it essentially feels as if it were hand-made, with the captions



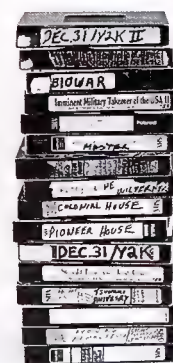


seemingly scribbled onto the pages after the fact. Instead of an essay there are various sections of text [top right], a manifesto of sorts on how to disappear, printed on green paper stock (which those working in offices will be familiar with). Look carefully, however, and you can see that every choice in the book is deliberate, right down to which photographs have an extra layer of gloss. *Broken Manual* is highly sophisticated but as its title suggests, it's a somewhat dysfunctional, idiosyncratic manual. Its form follows its function.

Form following function is the essence of what contemporary photobook design is doing. Design decisions are being made to support the photography and story because, in the words of Dutch photobook designer Hans Gremmen: "Everything that makes a book, the choice of paper, the size, the way it's bound, the quality of the printing, the scans... Everything should always be tailored to the book." If this is done well, the reader probably won't even notice because all the details will work as an organic whole, with no single aspect interrupting or disturbing the flow of the book.

### Reheaded Perckerwood

Design decisions can be very subtle and very close to the classic models. So, if *Broken Manual* is located at an extreme



end of photobook design, Christian Patterson's *Redheaded Peckerwood* (Mack, 2011) is much more conventional, but it still manages to bring the traditional model into the contemporary world. *Redheaded Peckerwood* [overleaf] photographically narrates the story of Charles Starkweather and Caril Ann Fugate, two teenage runaways who went on a Bonnie and Clyde-style killing spree in 1958. It includes various types of photograph, including reproductions of old documents, and they are in both colour and black-and-white. They are sequenced to follow the story chronologically but are presented in different sizes and positions on the page – some on the right-hand side (where we expect to find photographs in a book) leaving the left-hand side blank, others on the left-hand side with the right-hand side blank. Some are printed across the gutter, towards the left, or right; others are printed in pairs.

These seemingly mundane design decisions result in significant differences in how the images are read; they also have to be exactly correct, as otherwise the changes in image size and position could seem completely random. In fact, *Redheaded Peckerwood* is confusing, but it makes creative use of that confusion. We are all very familiar with how photographs in a photobook work; this book plays with our expectations,

*Broken Manual*

Above and left: *Broken Manual* by Alec Soth & Lester B. Morrison (ISBN: 978-3-869301-99-0). [www.steidlville.com](http://www.steidlville.com)

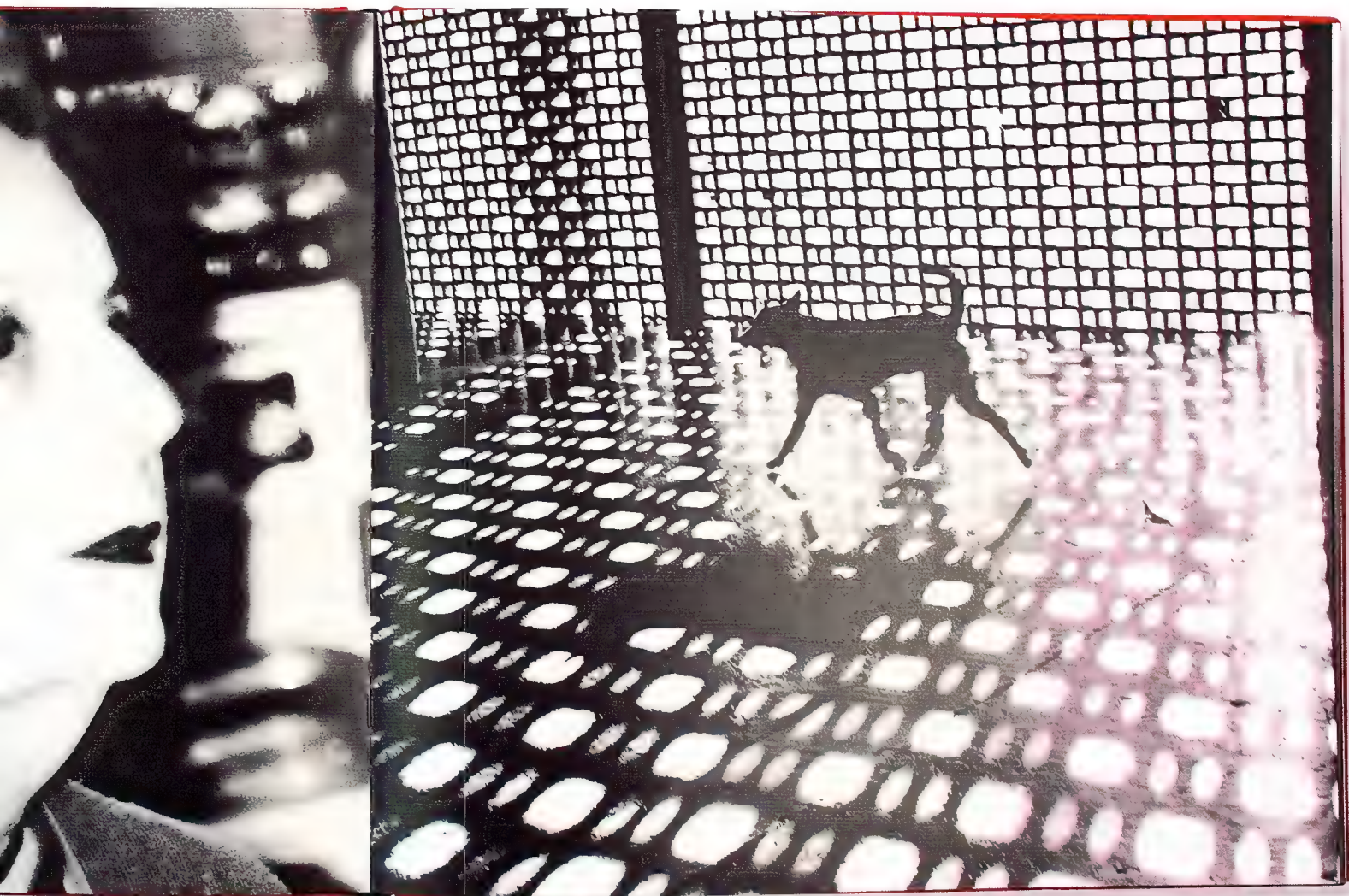




Above and right:  
*Redheaded Peckerwood* by  
Christian Patterson (ISBN:  
978-1-907946-14-1).  
[www.mackbooks.co.uk](http://www.mackbooks.co.uk)







to engage us, make us look, and induce us to read the story. It's a sophisticated publication for an audience that has seen a lot of photobooks.

### Capitolio

If *Redheaded Peckerwood* uses a contemporary approach to the classic photobook model, Christopher Anderson's *Capitolio* (RM, 2009) presents a contemporary approach to a different model. In the 1960s, books by photographers such as William Klein and Ed van der Elsken inspired a generation of Japanese photographers, including Daido Moriyama, to create a different kind of work. The main movement to emerge was called Provoke; the photographs were often grainy and contrasty, to the point of being literally just black-and-white, with no shades of grey. *Capitolio* [above] could almost be a Provoke book.

Anderson's background is in photojournalism, working both in colour and in black-and-white, but off-kilter compositions and grain have been part of the visual language of photojournalism for a while now. For *Capitolio*, shot in Venezuela, the photographer goes one step further by cropping the images to either create little vignettes to work off other photographs, or to have panoramas across the gutter.

The images are run full bleed, extending all the way to the edges of the pages, and often come in pairs without any space between them. Occasionally part of an image is on one page, with the rest only visible when the reader turns the page to see the next spread. The result is often disconcerting, especially given the size of the book. This is an intense book from what feels like an intense country.

Interestingly, Anderson was accused both of glorifying and of being too critical of Venezuela's president Hugo Chávez in discussions of the book online. I don't think he is doing either, but it's easy to see why *Capitolio* has ruffled feathers – it presents uncompromising photographs of an uncompromising subject in a very uncompromising way. The problem might simply be that people think *Capitolio* is photojournalism, which it is clearly not.

### Baghdad Calling

Photojournalism is often said to be in crisis these days, riven by uncertainties about both its business model and its photographic approach. Citizen journalism poses a particular challenge, because the ubiquity of mobile-phone cameras



Above and top: *Capitolio* by Christopher Anderson (ISBN: 978-6-077515-24-1). [www.editorialrm.com](http://www.editorialrm.com)





152 Suli, Kurdistan

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means many events are now recorded by people who just happen to be there (as happened recently with the capture and death of Muammar Gaddafi). With *Baghdad Calling* (Episode, 2008), Dutch photojournalist Geert van Kesteren embraced this conundrum to produce one of the finest examples of contemporary photojournalism.

The Iraq war forced millions of Iraqis to flee violence in their neighbourhoods, finding refuge either in other parts of the country or abroad; those neighbourhoods also became no-go zones for photojournalists because they were so dangerous. Van Kesteren put the two sides of the story together, visiting refugees in Syria, Jordan, and Turkey to photograph them and speak with them about their experiences, and asking them for photographs or videos they had taken of these areas. *Baghdad Calling* [above] combines these different elements into a very smart, coherent and moving book, and shows why Dutch design has become one of the benchmarks of photobook-making.

The bulk of *Baghdad Calling* consists of photographs taken by refugees. We would be hard-pressed to call those images photojournalism – most of them are everyday photographs of people posing, talking, a cat, a dinner or some neighbourhood, and there is no independent confirmation of what the viewer

## BAGHDAD CALLING

Above: *Baghdad Calling*, by  
Geert van Kesteren (ISBN:  
978-9-059730-83-0).  
[www.post-editions.com](http://www.post-editions.com)

gets to do. But occasionally there are traces of shocking violence too, and I would argue *Baghdad Calling* still is photojournalism because it convincingly tells a story – the story of the Iraqi refugees, and the country they had to leave.

One of the reasons the book works so well is because of the way it was put together. It handles the two types of photographs – van Kesteren's and the refugees' – by using two different types of paper; the mobile-phone images are reproduced on newsprint, with captions narrated by the refugees underneath. In between there are short sections with text and van Kesteren's photographs, printed on a different, but also thin, paper stock. All the pages have the same fragile feel, but there is no confusion over who took each photograph.

It would have been tempting to separate the professional's photographs from those of the amateurs. By bringing them together, with a smart take on how to distinguish one from the other, *Baghdad Calling* lends the refugees dignity. The design is almost a political act, offering those often presented as mere statistics an equal chance to share their stories.

### Come Bury Me

*Baghdad Calling* raises a crucial issue – stories, and our ability to verify them (or not), and that's the question at the heart





of Andrej Kremenschouk's *Come Bury Me* (Kehrer, 2010). When you open the book [right], there is a photograph of five people, full bleed – no title page, no table of contents, nothing. In the following pages there are just photographs, at least for a while, showing these five people, and some more, drinking, dancing, hugging animals and so on, in a very squalid home.

To some people, this is the way that photography should work – pictures alone, no text needed. But then there is text, after the main block of photographs – an essay by the photographer himself, explaining how he met the people in the photographs and re-telling some of the stories that they had told him. One introduced herself as a “three-time world champion in gymnastics”, while another said he had been a soldier in Vietnam. Stories. At some stage, one of the women told the photographer, “Don’t believe everything people tell you.”

The book ends on a grim note as the photographer recounts going back to see his acquaintances, and finding just one of them. The house they had partied in had burnt to the ground and his friends had died – the last images of the book are photographs of the ruins. We have the photographs, the photographer’s story, and the stories he was told. How

do we know what is real? How do we know the truth? When reading the essay, I found myself going back to the photographs, trying to work out who might possibly be who...

The design throws you into this world by giving you only the photographs at first. It makes the viewer look and make up her or his mind (as he or she inevitably will), then turns everything on its head, this time in words. Isn’t that what a lot of contemporary photography is about?

These five books are in no way representative of contemporary photobooks, but they all use design in a very smart and efficient way, to help carry the story, narrative or function of the book. Each one of them would be very different if the work was presented as in *American Photographs* and – just Evans’ classic would be a lesser book if its design was changed – these books would lose something in the process. Good design can elevate a photobook to dizzying heights – and good design often means you only notice it when you really look. Contemporary photobooks have become very sophisticated objects, aimed at a very sophisticated audience. *BJP*



Above: *Come Bury Me* by Andrej Kremenschouk (ISBN: 978-3-868281-20-0). [www.kehrerverlag.com](http://www.kehrerverlag.com)





1

# Eastern Promise

Once there were just a few key dates in the photofestival calendar, but in the last 15 years they have flourished, spotlighting local talent and bringing international focus onto previously overlooked photographic cultures. Now the Far East has been getting in on the act, **Bill Kowenhoven** visited two festivals that run back-to-back in China and Cambodia.

Travel broadens the mind they say, but it also provides for some amusing ironies. You fly through the night to the other side of the world only to meet up with your colleagues and neighbours – in this case, Christopher Phillips of the International Photography Centre in New York, who was one of four curators at a photofestival I visited in southern China late last year. Then I travelled on to another meet up in Cambodia, where I bumped into Charlie Jouvett, a French photographer now living in my adopted hometown of Berlin.

Travel also lends a far richer reading of what's going on in a particular place, and in the case of photofestivals, the opportunity to experience a different photography culture, talk to the local movers and shakers and get a real insight into how the scene all fits together. The two photofestivals in question here, the eighth edition of Lianzhou International Photography Festival and the fourth Photo Phnom

Penh, are cases in point where being on the ground, seeing things for oneself and talking with the participants provides a better picture than any catalogue can hope to present.

What makes these festivals interesting is that they both originated from French initiatives and are marketed by Relations Media in Paris, the premier PR firm for international photography festivals, following a similar path to Rencontres de Bamako in Mali and the Moscow Photo Biennale. Which begs the question as to what France (not to mention the local politicians and institutions, or indeed photographers) get out of it? Because unlike London or New York, which also consider themselves central to the photographic universe, Paris supports grass-roots photography via festivals around the world. Who better to ask about this than Christian Caujolle, a pivotal figure in contemporary French photography and initiator





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of Photo Phnom Penh? He explains it might well have as much to do with the legacy of France's Mission Civilisatrice as its historical position as the centre of the photographic world. Yet, whereas even 20 years ago this might have led to a top-down stricture run out of the Quai D'Orsay, those days are long gone.

### Next generation

In point of fact, despite still being sponsored by the Ministry of Culture rather than that of Foreign Affairs, it has served as an incubator for young Cambodian photographers who, thanks to the widening availability of broadband connections, are increasingly globalised in outlook while still wishing to present their stories their own way. We are not talking about being in Paris on the Tonlé Sap any more. As the young photographer, Kanha Chhay whose work on amputee sports in Cambodia – a place where

landmines continue to kill and maim thousands of people each year – says, "It is important to me as a Cambodian to present my stories to the world rather than some foreigner who doesn't understand our culture and our history."

A generation ago the Khmer Rouge wiped out the intelligentsia and up to one-third of the population. Now, after four years of running workshops, Photo Phnom Penh is helping rebuild a photographic culture from almost nothing. In the absence of photography teachers and schools, the workshops initiated by Caujolle with local photographer Philong Sovan and others have started to produce a small but vibrant photo community that is now beginning to get international recognition and, while still in its infancy, something is emerging out of the ashes left by the legacy of war. For example, Khvay Samnang, who presented work on a notorious housing project in Phnom Penh at the festival, has

shown his images at the Night of the Year screenings at Rencontres d'Arles and at Tokyo Wonder Site in Japan, while a number of photojournalists working for *The Phnom Penh Post* and local-language dailies and websites have been picked up internationally by galleries and agencies.

This commitment to incubating the local photography scene is what makes such festivals potentially transformative, helping to foster a new generation of photographers from what Shahidul Alam of Drik in Bangladesh calls "the Majority World". The exposure to international photographers and curators with the chance for international recognition, as well as the participation in workshops, is one thing, however – albeit a very important one in the case of Cambodia – but there are other factors to consider. Although both countries are nominally "People's Democracies", the latter exerts much tougher control of

1 From *Dislocation* © Luo Changwei.

2 *Temporary ward* from the series *Follow Him* © Wang Qingsong.



- 3 *Joyeux*, 2010, from the series *The Seven Mercenaries* © Philippe Pétremant, courtesy Galerie Le Réverbère, Lyon. This image was censored in Lianzhou because "the colour of red depicting Mao's face wrong".
- 4 From the series *Eighteen Stairs* © Wang Yuanling.
- 5 *Zigan Township Clinic in Yuanping City, Shanxi Province*, from the series *Life Space* © Qu Yan.
- 6 From the series *Walk Scenery* © Wang Xiaodong.



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the media and artistic expression, and Facebook and Twitter are not accessible there. Topics ranging from Tibet to pollution to train crashes are routinely censored, and this summer Ai Weiwei, China's best-known artist internationally, was arrested for 63 days, and in the wake of the Arab Spring, reporters were roughed up amid government fears of a "Jasmine Revolution".

### Political control

Given this backdrop, it's not surprising to hear that Lianzhou International Photofestival is subject to political control, and all the artworks displayed in the festival are vetted. What is more surprising is that works can be, and are, removed after being hanged, as was the case with Philippe Pétremant this time around. His image of a cut-up 100 Yuan note, one of his *The Seven Mercenaries* series [3], was removed because "the colour of red depicting Mao's face was wrong", according to the

festival's general curator, Duan Yuting. This incident coincided with the arrival of a high-ranking politician from the Guangdong provincial authority, testifying to the fact the festival is part of the cultural arm of the government. What is also interesting is that we, the Western guests – curators, artists and press – become part of the spectacle in the competition for power at the national level of Chinese politics in the run-up to the selection of a new leader of the Communist Party next year. Indeed, as the awards ceremony demonstrated, Lianzhou – a charming but largely overlooked city in Guangdong, China's richest province – was selected as a cultural jewel to attract international attention in a form of "green-washing". Yet at the same time the government touts its economic and political prowess through the construction of new railways and factories and so on that, as one breath will make one aware, come at

great cost to the environment and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people with increasing social unrest. In fact, we honoured guests become "useful idiots" for the politicians, part of the spectacle to make them look good.

### Social landscape

And what a spectacle it is! Despite it all, the curators of Lianzhou have put together a well thought-out festival, selecting approximately 50 Chinese and 12 foreign photographers under the title *Towards the Social Landscape*. The four curators – Duan Yuting, one of the festival's founders, François Cheval, director of the Musée Nicéphore Niépce in central France, Christopher Phillips of the ICP, and Olga Sviblova, director of the Multimedia Art Museum in Moscow, and founder of the Russian capital's Photo Biennale – put together a series of solo shows addressing change in the landscape and its effect on the

population, deliberately invoking a particular tradition of American photography by taking their title from a George Eastman House show from 1966. Yuting notes, "Today, we hold an exhibition with the same title because it has significance for Chinese photography at this stage. In the development of recent decades, a large number of works from Chinese photographers have tended towards the inner self and more personal expressions. At the same time, many photographers have focused on the dramatic changes to the landscape, and unprecedented changes in contemporary Chinese society, and the process of modernisation and social upheaval make photography an important medium to spread and research this reality."

As a mission statement, Yuting and her fellow curators hold close to this ambition in their exhibitions, shunning famous Chinese photographers who have landed on the international





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scene, with the exception of Wang Qingsong, showing epic works [2] from the *Follow Him* series. Rather, they concentrated on lesser-known documentary photographers to drive home the thesis of the festival to surprising effect.

There were plenty of discoveries to be made on the walls of the three main venues – two disused factories and an old granary building converted into a series of galleries. Notable was Qu Yan's *Life Space*, a series of three separate bodies of work from rural clinics, schools and Christian churches [5]. These interiors, mostly shot in Shanxi province, are deeply respectful of those at the bottom rung of the economic ladder who are all but forgotten casualties of the economic progress that has radically changed China's coastal cities but scarcely affected the interior.

Another body of work, *Eighteen Stairs* by Wang Yuanling, speaks to the anomie felt by those living in the great cities. Here the

artist photographs a series of individuals in studio apartments crammed with their possessions in an almost Vermeer-like light [4]. These simple portraits attest to the toll taken on the individual in Chongqing, a city of 37 million people. Other exhibitions depict the sweeping changes in terms of destruction of the old in favour of the new. Liu Yuan, Luo Changwei [1], Wang Bo and Wang Xiaodong [6] all present bleak images of the post-modernist sort that may reflect the influence of Nadav Kander, whose work on the Yangtze was exhibited at the festival in 2007. These architectural dystopias were somewhat balanced by the work of Canadian photographer Greg Girard, whose studies of Hanoi presented an example of how Vietnam has made some very real effort to preserve the old while building a new society.

All was not doom and gloom, however, in Lianzhou, as many of the younger photographers

portrayed the aspirations of their peers looking for fun and adventure at night or in the confines of their own alternative societies. Liu Wu portrayed her classmates from a rural university while Zhu Danyang's dirty flash pictures highlight people in the streets going out on the town. They could be the same people in New York, Seoul, Tokyo, or any big city, while Tang Haowu presented a version shot in natural light. Lin Zhipeng's documentation of gay culture would have been shocking a few years ago and potentially dangerous for both photographer and his subjects. Liu Yuan brought a fashion-inflected take on street culture.

Yet underlying the great diversity of this work is a sense of the growing divide in Chinese society where the split between rich and poor is getting dangerously wide. Despite the great successes that have brought prosperity to millions, there are, according to

a recent issue of *The Economist*, approximately 130 million living below the newly redefined poverty level of US\$1 per day. Yet China has more than a million millionaires, as measured in US dollars, according to Bloomberg, placing it third behind the US and Japan. Of this number, *The Wall Street Journal* reports, at least half wish to leave the country.

A body of work by Yang Xiaoxuan, *Cannot Hold*, depicts a world of beauty pageants, galas and vagrants that could have been photographed in any large city in the West where income inequality has finally begun to bubble over into social protest. For a country that famously championed equality and the iron ricebowl of a social net, the breakdown of society in the face of prosperity for a few and poverty for the many makes for a serious threat, especially as the party decides which leader to pick to lead the country for the next five years.





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### Emerging talent

If Lianzhou 2011 could be said to reflect issues derived from American photography of the 1960s and 70s, especially the New Topographics school, with a heady dose of socially critical work reminiscent of the FSA era of the 1930s, Photo Phnom Penh was themeless. Rather, it presented a showcase of emerging talents from Cambodia and elsewhere in south-east Asia, along with a smattering of Westerners who worked with them in workshops (a co-operative project titled *Intersections*), or who represented interesting ways of seeing from which the young Cambodians could be deemed to benefit. This is inspirational not just for the photographers but also for the general public.

With more than 16 venues, ranging from the Museum of Fine Arts to cafes and a series of evening slideshows in public spaces, including the main university and in local neighborhoods, and with

boats boasting large screens cycling through images as they cruised up and down the Tonlé Sap river, the Photo Phnom Penh is avowedly a public festival.

As noted, Khvay Samnang could be considered the star of this year's festival, and his series titled *Human Nature* [7] presented problems and opportunities that he solved by allowing his subjects to wear masks as they stand in their living spaces. The use of the mask is transformative, of course, rendering the individual into a form of theatrical player while at the same time preserving relative anonymity. The images have a Roger Ballen-like quality, yet, aside from the masks and the formal pose, they are not staged in the way Ballen's work has been orchestrated by the photographer.

Worlds interior and exterior were the subject of works by Korean photographer Yeondoo Jung and Huot Channa from Cambodia. Jung's *Southern Rainbow Seoul*

featured domestic interiors of the South Korean capital in a manner not unlike that of Beth Yarnelle Edwards: simple staged portraits of family members in their domestic environments that somehow depict something of the culture of her contemporaries. A locally famous architect who studied in Belgium, Channa photographed Phnom Penh by night producing a work not unlike that of Greg Girard. Her approach lets her find tranquility in the bustling city of more than two million, half of which seem to be on scooters, tuk-tuks or in SUVs at any given moment night or day.

Hong Menea captured some of that frenetic energy in a series of images shot from up high of people impossibly perched on motorcycles, the tops of trucks or on buses. Touch Yin Vannith's light-painted portraits filled the auditorium of the Royal University and accentuated the diversity of Cambodian society while tying it together stylistically. San Phyrum's

boxers combined, as portraits of boxers always do, the grace of the individual in stark shape and form with the theatrical violence that is both violent and dance-like. Phan Quang's deliberately arty project from the countryside depicted rhythms of nature and a pre-Khmer Rouge sense of harmony [8].

Two other historical bodies of work, of the Royal Ballet Dancers of Cambodia and film posters from the heyday of Cambodian cinema in the 1960s, also reflect the world before the catastrophic spill over of the American war in Vietnam and the coming of the Khmer Rouge. The dancers, immortalised by George Groslier in 1927, are all about the traditional arts of Cambodia that linger on in the friezes of Angkor Wat and elsewhere, and in the efforts of the University of Fine Arts to preserve those traditional art forms. The film posters, on the other hand, are about the high point of modernity that Cambodia had reached just before 1975 when the





7 From the series *Human Nature* © Khvay Samnang.

8 Untitled © Phan Quang.

8

Khmer Rouge attempted to smash the country back into pre-history.

Non-Cambodian photographers taking part in this year's Phnom Penh Photo included Rasel Chowdhury from Bangladesh, whose work from Dhaka was analogous yet inspirational to Cambodia's budding documentary photographers'. Malik Nejmi, of French-Moroccan heritage and Agence Vu, tackled immigration in the West with a series from Orleans, France showing people between two worlds. Indian photographer Bharat Sikka documented the non-touristy side of Goa, while British-born photographer Matt Wilson's images from Cuba, Bosnia, and the US represented different modes of visual storytelling. Charlie Jouvett's quiet work, *Geheimnistraeger* (Bearers of Secrets), depicted charged landscapes in Germany and Central Europe, providing a way of representing horror and memory without being too

literal in a country still haunted by mass graves, execution centres and killing fields. Luo Mingyi, a former businessman from Chengdu in China, presented a body of street portraits worthy of Bruce Gilden, while Raphaël Dallaporta's extraordinary body of work, *Antipersonnel*, displayed during the Cambodian Landmines Conference on Sisowath Boulevard, had a telling resonance in a country still littered with these deadly devices.

Still, it was the work of the very young students taught by Philong Sovan that proved most inspirational. The six children from his village some 30 miles from Phnom Penh represent the second generation growing up since peace returned to Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge were driven from power in 1979. Their work, titled *The Blue Dream*, from an accident with the white balance settings of their cameras, is a delicate slice of the everyday reality of a rural village as seen through the eyes

of children. The kids splash and play, photograph the fields, their families and their homes – many of which have no or only intermittent electricity – and manage to produce a number of remarkable images. The presentation of their work in an outdoor courtyard near the old French church, surrounded by local families, was worth the trip both for the quality of the work and its ability to encourage more young photographers to take up cameras and tell their own stories their own way.

### Precarious future

Both festivals ran portfolio reviews, which enhanced the value of the events for both visitors and locals alike by presenting opportunities to see new work for inclusion in publications or exhibitions abroad, and by providing international expertise to those unable to travel. Twenty minutes of conversations between critics and photographers can be worth more than 20

weeks on the internet. But more generally, the two festivals have very different approaches, and very different circumstances. Lianzhou is an established festival on the photography circuit and, being in China, has not particularly struggled to find local and international backing. Photo Phnom Penh is in a precarious state, not the least because Europe's economic situation threatens the budget of the Institut Français, the main sponsor. The festival will have to seek most of its monies from private sources if there is to be a fifth edition, but although the last gasps of the Mission Civilisatrice may be mourned in some quarters, there is reason to believe Caujolle and his team have created a self-sustaining – if low budget – festival that will nurture the first generations of photographers to emerge from the wreckage that was Cambodia. *BJP*

[www.lianzhoufoto.com](http://www.lianzhoufoto.com)  
[www.institutfrancais-cambodge.com/ppp](http://www.institutfrancais-cambodge.com/ppp)



# Ring light for video

Fashion and celebrity photographers have long known the benefits of ring lights as a versatile and flattering source of illumination. And now filmmakers are getting in on the act with a new generation of products designed for pro video cameras that can be adapted for digital SLRs. **Michael Roscoe** tests three devices at three different price points, starting from as little as £100 and going up to the £1000 mark.

## Gekko Lenslite

The British-made Lenslite is the highest priced of our trio, using 16 LEDs and coming with features such as a rotating filter tray and a collimating lens that will ensure the cast of light is perfectly parallel.

Originally designed to work with professional HDV or small video cameras, it is possible to attach it to the base of a digital SLR camera via the tripod screw using a new mount. It's worth setting aside at least quarter of an hour for the first time you assemble the Lenslite kit, and once the camera has been securely fastened to the unit, it's likely a step down ring will need to be fitted around the barrel of the lens to ensure it also firmly clamps into the aperture of the ringlite.

The Lenslite can be battery powered for users who want a free range of movement as the flicker-free ballast is compatible with any 12 or 24V film or video battery (that employs the two-pin Lemo DC in connector or the Lemo to XLR jumper with a standard 4 pin, pin 4 +ve, pin 1 -ve). Alternatively, it can be mains powered, as it was in this review. The limit of movement is thus restricted to the length of an extension lead.

Although the Lenslite is bigger than the diminutive Rotolight, it is by no means large or cumbersome, weighing 450g excluding ballast, and its overall diameter is 175mm at its widest point. It has a no-nonsense, utilitarian appearance and a build quality that feels pretty bulletproof, and it's straightforward and intuitive to operate once set up. The side of the ballast features a dial to dim the power and five switches,

which enable you to use the "sector switching" feature, which, in essence, allows the option to choose to illuminate a line of four, eight, 12 or all 16 LEDs, at once. It is also possible to change the

position of these LED combinations, illuminating the bottom or top row, or either side, or a line of vertical and horizontal LEDs at the same time to get an L-shape cast of light.

Additionally, the device is compatible with a number of remote Gekko accessories that can become particularly useful when the camera and Lenslite are located out of reach on tricky shoots – for example, while up a crane. The wireless remote control has a dimming facility, along with access to sector switching and a master on/off switch over a range of up to 200m. A more basic remote dimmer device is available for use at a distance of around 75cm.

The Lenslite produces a daylight balanced 6000K reading with no filtration. The light quality feels refined and perfectly even, which is evident in the familiar ringflash-like shadow cast behind a model. It's the most powerful ring light in this round-up, which makes it more useful for stills photography than the other lights reviewed, as it is possible to attain a faster shutter speed and a smaller aperture setting at a lower ISO setting. Its power output means that, when shooting full and half-length body shots, it is possible to place the Lenslite further away from the model than the other lights.

Its main purpose, of course, is for video capture, and I used an ISO 3200 setting to get an aperture of around f/11 (at 24fps) to shoot head shots of a model with the camera and Lenslite positioned roughly three metres away from the sitter. It is also worth noting that this ring light emits an almost indistinguishable level of heat output, making it comfortable for your model, and it works silently, so there should be no concerns about it interfering with audio recordings.

Further control can be brought into play by slotting in a diffusion filter to the front of the LEDs to soften the quality of light, although that cuts down the power by a couple of f stops. The kit that I tested also has an orange filter that warms up the cast of light to a tungsten-balanced 3200K, but cuts the power by around one f stop (see the table of results on page 76 for more details).

In conclusion, the Lenslite is a truly professional tool that offers refined control for the moviemaker who won't accept compromise. It

can be used as a key light in its own right, thanks to its powerful output, but its primary use will be as a front light to operate seamlessly with other ambient lighting. It is possible to dim or brighten the output accurately to match the surrounding environment. It casts an incredibly precise and direct light with little fall off, and the sector-switching function means that you aren't limited to the distinctive ring-light cast.

Photographers who are new to HD video capture with their DSLR should not be intimidated by a product like this that is aimed at professional moviemakers. It is simple to operate and control and although it may seem like a reasonably large investment at just over £1000 +VAT, it is available to rent from hire companies that also offer expert advice and support. *BJP*

[www.gekkotechnology.com](http://www.gekkotechnology.com)  
[www.cirrolite.com](http://www.cirrolite.com)

## Kamio Ring-Light

Manufactured by US-based company Kino Flo Lighting Systems, the Kamio Ring-Light differs from the other two models here as it uses a single fluorescent lamp and not a series of LEDs. The largest ring light tested, at 25.5×23×6.5cm, is nevertheless pretty lightweight at 500g, remaining a truly portable solution that can be easily handheld.

I used the Kamio 6 System kit, priced £944 +VAT, which includes the Ring-Light and everything else needed to get up and running. Once again, it is worth putting aside plenty of time to ensure the kit is set up correctly. The Kamio needs to be connected to a comparatively compact-sized 1.9×6.4×5.1cm ballast that can be attached to the top of most professional video cameras via a mounting bracket, and is compatible with DSLRs as the ballast can be fitted onto a camera's hotshoe using a Baby Mount Screw. The ballast can feel cumbersome and so the Baby Pin Shoe Mount can also be used to fit to the top of a light stand, although it is best to leave it connected to the camera if you want to move around with it.

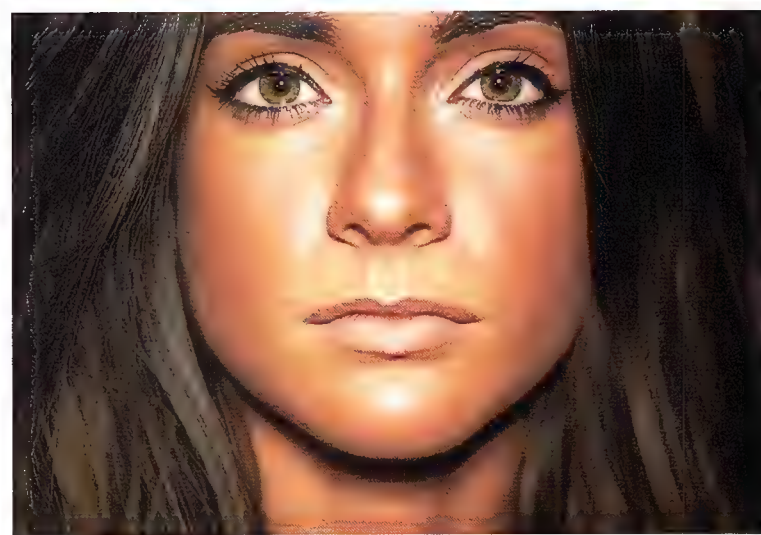
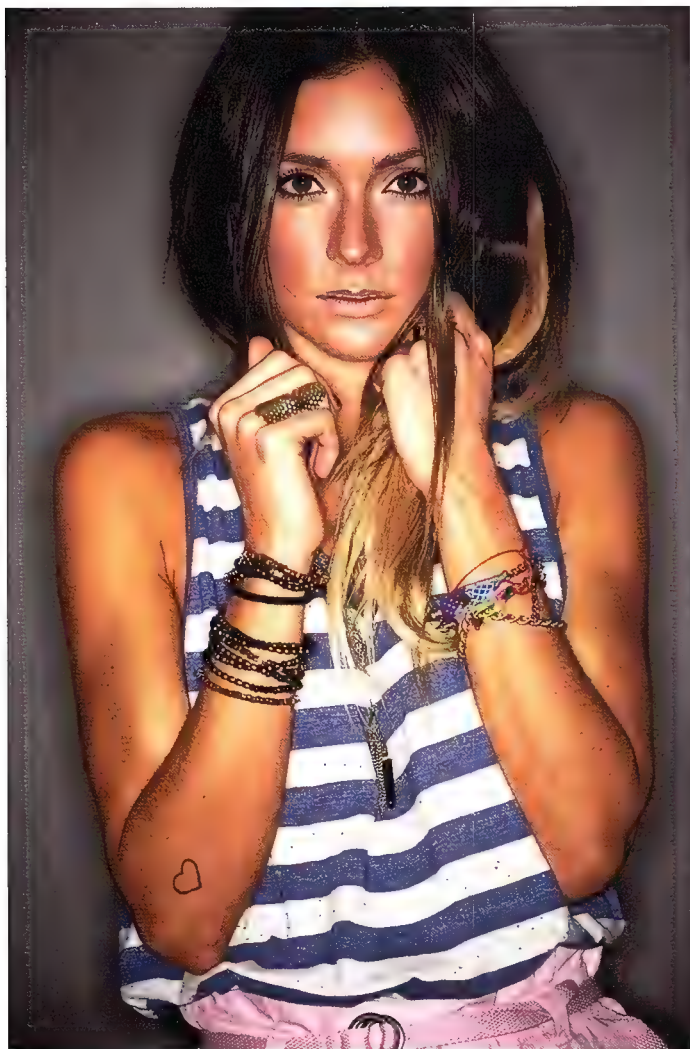
It's another well-made tool designed to do a job without unnecessary bells or whistles; its solid construction and sturdy metal and plastic frame and housing will withstand the inevitable bumps and scrapes of intensive professional use. Set up is quite straightforward

**Gekko's Lenslite** Sector Switching feature enables users to illuminate selected LEDs to help get a perfect exposure. This feature can be used, for example, to fill-in any shadow areas on one side of a person's face.





## FLATTER TO DECEIVE



**LIGHT UP** The Gekko Lenslite [above] produces an even ringflash-like shadow. This image was captured at f/5.6 at 1/160s with the ISO set on 3200. The Kamio Ring-Light [top right] was used to expose this shot at f/5 at 1/100s at ISO 3200. The RL48-B Stealth [bottom right] is best used to shoot close-up stills. This image used the Rotolight product without any filters to get an exposure of at f/3.2 at 1/125s with an ISO of 3200. Images © Michael Roscoe. Stylist: Sophie Penn.

as the Kamio is connected to the ballast, which in turn is connected to a power supply that plugs into the mains power. (It is possible to power the device using a 12v battery, although this was not tested). The kit also comes with three barndoors that can be screwed in and firmly attached in seconds.

The Kamio is mounted directly onto a camera lens. It features an adjustable clamping ring that will fit lenses with an outer diameter of 112mm, although the kit comes with a number of adapter rings to ensure that smaller lenses can also be used. Kamio recommends only fixed barrel lenses should be used with professional video cameras as they are designed to support the weight of the light, so apply caution when using the Kamio with a DSLR, and avoid using longer zoom lenses.

The controls consist of a simple

power on/off switch and dimmer dial that are located on the side of the ballast. The dimmer should be on its maximum setting before you switch it on and it takes a couple of seconds to ignite the fluorescent tube, although it can take longer in cold temperatures. Before getting started it is best to leave the lamp on for at least three minutes, for it to get to full temperature before setting the desired dimmer setting.

The Kamio has a very wide beam angle but the barndoor attachments can be manually adjusted to attain a narrower cast of light. It

produces a comparatively diffused cast of light even when no filters are used. This is due to the fluorescent lamp and the matt white enclosure behind it that helps bounce more light onto the subject for an impressive soft and flattering flicker-free illumination. It can also

be fitted with a specific Kino Flo True Match lamp to produce the desired colour temperature without have to cut down the power by using a corrective filter. The Kamio 6 System that I used came with four lamps that produce a warm tungsten cast and a more neutral daylight colour temperature.

The Kamio can be used when shooting stills but it is necessary to use a high ISO setting like all the ring lights in this article. I used

a typical exposure setting of f/5 at 1/100s with the ISO at 3200 when the lamp was positioned within a few metres of a

**Kamio's Ring-Light** produces a soft cast of light from its flicker-free lamp. The angle can be controlled by adjusting the barndoor attachment.





subject. When recording video I used ISO 3200 to get an aperture of around f/8 (at 24fps) to shoot the model's head and shoulders with the camera and Kamio placed within two metres from the subject. The Kamio emits no noise, but it does produce marginally more heat than its LED counterparts. This is so minimal that there is no risk it will make sitters perspire or food wilt.

It isn't the fastest model of ring light available but it is worth waiting for. It is well constructed, straightforward to operate and delivers a high-quality cast of light that is ideal for beauty commissions as a key light. Its fine dimming and control make it a first-class fill-in light, especially when working under tungsten lighting or daylight balanced ambient lighting. *BJP*

www.kinoflo.com  
www.cirrolite.com

### Rotolight RL48-B Stealth Edition

Another British-made product, the Rotolight RL48-B Stealth Edition is the least-expensive ring light of the three here, priced under £100. The cast of continuous light comes from 48 LEDs, and its compact size (outer diameter 138mm) and light weight (90g) make it a portable solution. It doesn't fit around a camera lens – it isn't meant to; the Rotolight's aperture is too narrow. But this tight aperture is designed to slot onto a shotgun microphone that is mounted to a camera, such as the Rode NTG-2. Alternatively, the Rotolight RL48-B can also be mounted directly

### Table of results

The following power readings were taken with a Minolta Auto Meter IV F (light meter) set at ISO 100 with a shutter speed of 1/30s.

Ambient light meter readings at a distance of 1m

Gekko Lenslite	f/3.3 (equivalent to f/16.5 at ISO 3200)
Kamio Ring-Light	f/1.4 (equivalent to f6.3 at ISO 3200)
Rotolight RL48-B Stealth	f/1 (equivalent to f/5.6 at ISO 3200)

onto a camera's hotshoe with a lollipop-shaped mount that can also be attached to a light stand.

The RL48-B is powered by three AA batteries and has an on/off button on its front. The RL48-B comes with a number of filters that are stored inside the light to alter the colour temperature of the cast illumination. There are other filters that will diffuse and soften the light as well as two ND (Neutral Density) filters that will lower the power output by a half or a full f stop.

The Rotolight Interview Kit v2 that I used (priced £289) comes in a pouch that contains two RL48-B Stealth lights, two stand mounts and a Colour FX Gel Filter Kit. The RL48-B is weather-resistant, and its construction feels refined and robust, so it should endure regular use. It is easy to get the kit set up in less than a minute. The rear part of the Rotolight is detached with a slight twist and pulled apart to reveal the filters, diffusion screen and a simple chart to help you differentiate which one is which.

A clear plastic front cover protects the LEDs, and can be removed when you need to fit any filters into it to alter the cast of light. As mentioned previously, the RL48-B can be fitted onto a shotgun microphone that has a foam windshield to ensure a snug fit and to stop it from sliding off. I've been told there are no sound interference issues when any of the Rotolight products are used with recording equipment, and this was certainly true in my tests.

The RL48-B Stealth can also be fitted onto a stand mount that features a straightforward quick-release clip mechanism that fits through the aperture of the unit. The mount can be slotted on to a camera's hotshoe or screwed onto the top of most light stands or a tripod plate. (The stand

mount comes bundled with the Interview Kit v2, or can be bought for £35.99.)

The device's performance belies its small size and light weight. It casts a punchy and crisp cast of light with a wide 110° beam angle with a very even light distribution, which means there are no unsightly hot spots. The RL48-B Stealth is most likely to be used as a front light (positioned on a camera's hotshoe/microphone), so its wide-beam angle is ideal for illuminating broad areas in front of the camera, which can come in useful, for example, when shooting a video interview with more than one person in the frame.

When it is used as a front light the power output of the RL48-B Stealth strikes the balance perfectly between producing enough light for the job and not blinding a model or interviewee. It is best used in conditions when other ambient light is present and it works well as a fill-in light where any shadows are nicely smoothed out. If used without any other ambient light present it is best positioned close to the subject matter. I had to shoot the HD video on ISO 3200 to get an aperture of around f/8 (at 24fps) to shoot close-ups of a model. This was with the camera and the hotshoe-mounted RL48-B Stealth positioned about 60cm from the sitter.

The RL48-B Stealth can be used to light and shoot stills, but it is the same as any other continuous lighting of this ilk as it can't (and doesn't pretend to) match the power a burst of flash can produce. I had to use a high ISO setting, a wide aperture and a reasonably slow shutter speed to capture a head shot with exposure settings of f/3.2 at 1/125s at ISO 3200.

Controlling the colour temperature of the device is simple and effective. The lamp casts a relatively cold cast when used unfiltered, thanks to the bundled

Lee filters that include a neutral 5600K daylight output, or even a tungsten equivalent of around 3200K that will help to match any ambient light that is present.

The RL48-B Stealth is likely to be left on for no more than a few minutes at a time while shooting video clips, and used this way the battery longevity was impressive. The three Energizer L91 AA batteries I used retained near full power during one particular shoot over a four-hour period, but I was careful to turn them off between takes. Although they shouldn't need to be left on, I discovered that when I did permanently leave them on, they performed admirably over the first 1.5 hours when around one f stop of power was lost. After two hours, the light deteriorated and lost more than 2.5 stops.

Rotolight says this is a characteristic of the batteries, rather than the lights, saying they tend to "peak at the beginning, before settling into a long, steady period, and finally they die very quickly at the end", and adding, "if the use is intermittent, the Energizer battery recovers, and the voltage goes up." Despite this, a Rotolight spokesman says he likes the batteries because of their higher capacity (2850mA/H) and voltage output (up to 1.8v), producing a bright light that delivers around four hours of useful performance.

There's no doubt the Rotolight kit should appeal to both beginners and expert videographers. Its small size and light weight make it ideal when you're travelling light or when you want to light subject matter in cramped conditions.

The control afforded by the diffusion and Kelvin-rated filters means even the most demanding user will find it hard to grumble. It is ideal as a fill-in light when working with existing ambient lighting conditions, but it is also worth mentioning the Colour FX Gel Filter Kit (included with the Interview Kit v2) for more creative control. The pack comes with 10 Lee filters, including a Cosmetic Peach filter option that is ideal for attaining optimum skintones.

The RL48-B Stealth will appeal to newcomers wanting affordable video lighting with build quality comparable with lighting solutions at more than double its price. *BJP*

www.rotolight.com





**Correction fringing** noticeable around the fronds has been removed effectively, and some geometric correction is possible. Image © Kevin Carter.

## SOFTWARE

## DxO Optics Pro 7 Elite

**Raw conversions and optical corrections** are still what it does best, finds Kevin Carter, but version 7 of DxO's automated image-enhancement program has some welcome improvements.

Long before Apple and Adobe introduced their popular raw workflow solutions, DxO Labs, a pioneering software company founded by ex-Kodak employees and based in Paris, was already wowing a small but discerning, mainly enthusiast-led user base with Optics Pro. Today the company provides embedded image-software solutions as well as image-quality evaluation and measurement tools for camera and sensor makers, but it was all on the back of its pioneering work on Optics Pro.

This raw converter software differed from the rest by offering automated image enhancement and optical corrections for both raw and JPEG files (with some restrictions) using specific lens and sensor-based profiles. But keeping pace with camera and lens introductions meant compatibility was limited, and downloading and installing the specific profiles, or "modules", was a far from slick affair.

At around £99 for the Standard and £199 for the Elite version, price wasn't a factor, but I suspect the user experience and automation was only a small part of the reason the software wasn't widely adopted by professionals. Even today, there's still no support for raw files from medium format cameras. What's more, although Optics Pro integrated reasonably well with Adobe's Lightroom (from version 4.5), as a standalone utility it lacked a full complement of image-editing tools, and barely touched the surface as a complete raw workflow solution. However, when used as intended, as a largely automated raw converter, DxO Optics Pro



really stood out for the rendering quality.

The latest iteration, version 7, is a much more polished article. If you're accustomed to Lightroom or Phase One's Capture 1 Pro, the user interface will be familiar and it is largely intuitive to use. In comparison to Lightroom, or Apple's Aperture, Optics Pro isn't as capable as a browser. It displays thumbnails of JPEGs and raw files but it has limited scope for sorting and ranking, and no provision for adding keywords or displaying and editing IPTC data. Some EXIF data is displayed; you can add a copyright notice and author, but it's kept brief – after all, this is meant as an express solution.

As in previous versions, the automated enhancement and correction process takes centre stage. This feature is not to be thought of as some beginners' option – removing defects is the core function of Optics Pro and further adjustment is supposed to be complementary. If using JPEG or any in-camera aberration-correction options, everything should be turned off, or at least dialled back, but as you might expect, it is with raw files that the program offers the most scope.

Optical correction and image enhancement is applied as a preset, but you can deviate from this of course. There are 30 or so other presets (B&W, HDR, earlier versions' default renderings and the like) to choose from an easily accessible dropdown menu, and the range of adjustment tools has

expanded over the years, allowing you to fine-tune a substantial range of image parameters. In turn, these settings can be saved and used as custom presets, much like you would with Lightroom.

### What's new?

There have been a few tweaks to the interface, and the workflow has been simplified. Projects are still available, but version 7 defaults to file and folder browsing and, as a result, the default correction preset is applied to the image displayed in the preview window as you start browsing, and is updated constantly when zooming in and out. Because of this there are just three tabbed workspaces; the View option is no longer needed.

However, to make adjustments you must switch tabs between the file and folder structure to the Customise tab. This focuses your attention on one folder, shown in the thumbnail strip, but why this couldn't remain on display as an option, as with Lightroom, is anyone's guess as there's plenty of room either side, even in the Advanced workspace, which splits tools between left and right sides.

The far right allows adjustment using one of two user modes; First steps and Advanced. The former looks more like a beginners' mode, but the idea is to keep file handling to a minimum. To this end the correction algorithms have been optimised and the utility feels more responsive than earlier offerings. Windows users can benefit from support for Open CL and with it

the extra boost in performance this affords from using a compatible video card's extra processing grunt.

On my multi-core Mac desktop with an external Raid array, Optics Pro wasn't as responsive as Lightroom, but it's unlikely to be, given the corrections made. Images with the default correction preset applied are a bit sluggish to render, but it's not helped by under-utilising the processors' multiple virtual cores or by the lack of support for Open CL on the Mac.

As for improvements in the settings and adjustments, version 7 adds a couple of tweaks to default settings and two new sliders to existing tools. A bokeh slider helps lessen unsightly edge artefacts after automatic sharpening, while a new Edge offset allows stronger sharpening towards the edges of the frame – it's a time-saving feature and one designed for use with lenses that don't as yet have a profile. Those that do and are known to be softer at the edges are automatically sharpened in this way – and it's just one of the many corrections applied that make Optics Pro intriguing.

Automatic detection of the profiles themselves is a far less arduous task than it was, and version 7 limits the number of suggestions if it can't locate the correct module. It is an interruption though, and there's still a lack of support for certain new pro-level lenses – the Canon EF 8-15mm f/4L is an obvious one, but also there are no Sigma fisheye lenses listed despite their ubiquity. Support



for the less pro-orientated brands is improving however.

There are some preconceived ideas with regards to lens use. FA module for the new Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM is included but not matched with any of Canon's pro-level camera bodies. DxO thinks it's not a pro-level lens, and arguably it isn't. However, this problem highlights the scale of the developers' task. DxO says it's introducing a new system allowing a dramatic increase in the number of modules during 2012.

## Conclusions

While not as extensive as some users would like to see, the update to Optics Pro version 7 can be viewed as positive. Instead of trying to become an all-in-one workflow solution, the software is very much focusing on its core strengths: automated defect correction and rendering quality. The user interface is modern and uncluttered and the tool set doesn't feel lacking. DxO must have been tempted to follow rivals but it's refreshing to see the continued integration with Lightroom as an option. While it's true rivals are encroaching on Optics Pro's expertise with optical corrections, it remains a worthwhile choice for professionals. It's not without some gaps in lens and camera coverage, but even highly experienced operators would be hard pressed to match the speed and quality of corrections, and the rendered quality is very impressive. Life is simply too short to put everything through Photoshop. *BJP*

www.dxo.com

## CAMERA TEST

### The right balance?

**The fourth generation of Ricoh's GRD compact improves on its predecessor, finds Jonathan Eastland, but thankfully not at the cost of the camera's acclaimed handling.**

The world is awash with compact cameras sporting miniature sensors matched to fixed or interchangeable high-spec glass. Most are capable of excellent performance, the comparative evidence of which can be found on the pages of family or military history magazines littered with sepia-toned photographs

unearthed from ancient collections – fuzzy, grainy, soft images captured on equally ancient silver-halide technology. Almost any compact digital camera does a better job. But given the vast choice of cameras and formats, which one to go for?

Inevitably, it comes down to the balance between image quality and ergonomics and, to my mind, a compact must be pocket-sized. There are a handful of contenders, but my money goes to Ricoh for its pursuit of the ergonomically ideal in a very small package.

The design and size of the GRD is based on Ricoh's 28mm fixed focal length GR1 35mm film camera of the 1990s. Back then it was a hit, eventually spawning a now much-sought-after 21mm fixed-lens sibling. Digital incarnations have progressed from the original eight-megapixel CCD model to the latest GR IV at 10 megapixels, featuring (as did the GR III of 2009) a slightly larger body and screen size. Other than that, you can move between models with familiar dexterity as its buttons and dials – once set in the comprehensive menu selections – need little or no further adjustment for everyday shooting.

But perhaps the overriding and much-lauded factor that makes this such a stand-out camera compared with the competition is simply the way it feels in the hand. Holding it seems to make the lack of a zoom lens completely irrelevant. Holding it just encourages you to shoot, at anything and everything. It reminds me, dare I say it, of the sense of liberation I feel with a Leica in my hand.

Sentiment aside, the new GR IV follows the tradition of earlier models in having a well-engineered magnesium alloy outer shell finished in the now familiar rough-surfaced black paint. My only gripe is that in warm weather, holding a GRD for long periods softens the glue attaching the pre-formed composite resin finger grips, which then start to slide around. This has been a problem from the outset of the GRD, and I'm surprised Ricoh appears to have ignored it.

**Interval Composite** is a new mode enabling the production of balanced night scenes by layering only the high-intensity pixel data from each of many captures into a final shot. This image combines 21 frames of 1.3s exposure each at maximum aperture using the GW-2 21mm lens adapter in 16:9 panorama format. Stopping down a little reduces bug-eye lighting artifacts. IC and other modes mentioned in the main text can be finely adjusted using menu driven exposure, contrast and dynamic range bracketing features.

## Glass act

The GR IV features the same 28mm equivalent fixed lens featured on its predecessor, and improves on it. An eight-element, six-group optical cell, featuring two precision aspherical and three special low-dispersion elements with a maximum aperture of f/1.9 (up from f/2.4 on GR II). Now vacuum coated, it takes performance up another incremental level with reductions to ghosting and flare.

Ricoh is keen to highlight the bokeh effects of the GR IV's seven-bladed diaphragm lens. However, the fact is that in general shooting beyond a distance of approximately 1.5m, the benefits are difficult to see. The camera's small sensor (approximately 7.6×5.7mm) and lens design combine to produce great depth-of-field. Moving closer to the main subject decreases depth-of-field at larger apertures, but the out-of-focus image-isolating appearance manifest by larger sensor/lens combinations is not something the GR IV can replicate.

Extreme wide-angle and short telephoto adapter lenses are available as optional extras, and these produce good results. I used a 21mm converter on one recent aerial assignment fitted to a GRIII poked out through a hole in the cockpit Plexiglass at about 2500ft. The level of small detail visible in resulting files was acceptable in an A4 print, but probably useless to anyone looking to identify



car-registration plates from that height, a succinct reminder that small-sensored cameras have their resolution limits.

## Focus pocus

Those familiar with the original GRD will see similarities in external features of the new model. A small window sits to the top left of the lens mount, hiding an external AF sensor that, when combined with the camera's conventional contrast AF system, halves the time taken for the GR IV to adjust focus, down from 0.4s on earlier models to 0.2s. New focus algorithms also improve focusing time in Macro mode.

This hybrid system enabled the addition of an extra user distance to be set in Snap mode in the Focus menu, offering a pre-focus to exposure time-lag reduction.

Similarly, in Auto mode, the external AF sensor kicks in for quicker response. Full Press Snap mode is still a separate option, but now, when the shutter release is pressed halfway, the full hybrid AF system is used to calculate the exact object to camera distance. A new AF Continuous choice also triggers focus bracketing while getting things sharp in the



Improved Ricoh's GR IV





coal hole is facilitated by a new image sensor-shift-stabilisation feature adding, according to Ricoh, an extra three EV stops of effective shutter time.

One of the earlier problems associated with large-scale RGB colour printing from these cameras has been the more noticeable effects of object edge colour bleeding, a little like the effects an ink spot has when applied to blotting paper. The effects are not visible with the naked eye at normal viewing distance for an A4 print, but they can be seen in larger print sizes.

The new image engine not only appears to eliminate this aberration at higher magnifications when recording in Fine JPEG mode with an improved set of processing algorithms and new optical colour filter, it also does a better job of controlling electrical and chroma noise at higher ISO settings. The addition of a new Multi-P Auto white balance and improvements to existing Auto white balance menu settings enables better tonally balanced colour control, especially in mixed lighting. Images shot in normal daylight featuring large areas of light tones show a marked differentiation compared with earlier GR models, resulting in apparently cleaner files. Inspection at higher magnification reveals how the new GR Engine IV appears to perform more image smoothing compared with

previous models, introducing a pronounced watercolour effect to out-of-focus image areas.

Ricoh's image-processing technology and pixel interpolation algorithms use predictive interpolation to re-adjust overexposed image areas and for which the company claims a dynamic range expansion of +1EV. In practice, it sort of works, but I found the results disappointingly flat and needing some post-production work to bring them up to speed. Best results are obtained, as ever, by user control first ascertaining correct exposure values for the subject.

The camera's menu options reveal some influence from Pentax, which Ricoh acquired last autumn. Image settings benefit from the addition of new modes; Bleach Bypass endeavours to emulate the more anaemic look of washed-out colour negative. Positive Film, on the other hand, "recalls a famous type of film used in the past", says Ricoh, which I can only conclude is a reference to the recently discontinued Kodachrome emulsion. I don't know of another "famous type", but if this is indeed supposed to be it, Ricoh's software engineers have a long way to go. It is nowhere near close.

In addition to Vivid, Standard and regular black-and-white available in two image settings, Cross Process and High Contrast



**Detail** from full-frame 100 percent crops enlarged 1.5 times for page clarity made on the GR III [top left] and IV [below left] at the same ISO 100 and exposure settings within a few seconds of each other at standard camera default settings. The GR IV produces visibly improved object edge tonal definition with marginally less pixel colour bleeding apparent at high magnifications. A little extra post work is required to get GR III files to the same A3 benchmark level. Images © Jonathan Eastland.

black-and-white are other newly added options. Personally, I could never see the point of cross-processing, but this will appeal to some and may even be useful on occasion for a different interpretation of run-of-the-mill low-contrast scenes. Those who know and are avid aficionados of the look of Tri-X or HP5 Plus film images may go for the original eight-megapixel GRD camera; despite consecutive improvements to colour shooting through the GR range, it still delivers the most film-like black-and-white interpretations after post-processing conversion.

An added menu-selectable, three-level Dynamic Range Compensation feature improves image colour richness and gradient smoothness across highlights and dark zones by suppressing over and underexposure, automatically dividing up the image and performing Contrast Correction on each area. This is in addition to the existing dynamic range double shot - in need of a camera support - achieved through layering two images, and for which B (bulb) and T (time) exposures can now be used in Manual mode; great for still lifes, architecture and other scenics.

### Image quality

From the outset, image quality for all of the GRD models has seen incremental improvements

to the original standard, which was already very good. However, it should be remembered that, while the new model has a far more comprehensive set of operating features than any of its predecessors, and it does unquestionably produce cleaner-looking image files straight from camera at factory default settings, the very small sensor size and pixel pitch limits the extent to which JPEG files can be successfully enlarged. That said, attaining the benchmark double-page-spread (A3) with this new model is a breeze, and for those with the time and inclination, shooting raw offers further resolution gains.

### Conclusions

There are other small cameras capable of delivering high image-quality levels, but which only fit the compact category with a bit of struggle. It is the Ricoh GR IV's diminutive size and simple functionality that puts it ahead of the competition in my view. It costs from £450, but I like the idea that by attaching a long necklace to the GR's tripod bush, I can have a camera with me at all times that doesn't get in the way of ordinary life any more than a pair of reading glasses, and is just about as easy to use. *BJP*

www.ricoh.co.uk



**Before and after** The original, ungraded footage [right] has washed-out highlights and deep shadows, and while it's too much of a stretch to recover detail in the sky (it's all cloud), detail in the collecting bag in the foreground is greatly improved [far right] by Tonalizer. And, the same can be said of the scene's overall tonality. Image © Kevin Carter.

## Making the Grade

Kevin Carter test-drives Tonalizer VFX, a photographic-style plug-in for Final Cut Pro X that aims to make video grading as intuitive as raw conversion for still images.



With this year looking every bit as gloomy as the last in terms of the economy, an increasing number of photographers are trying their hand at video to supplement their income. But while there's a lot of crossover regarding capture tools and the skills to use them, learning all about post-production provides a pretty steep learning curve. That said, it's no more difficult than what most photographers had to get their heads around with the advent of digital, and Photoshop in particular. And, although Photoshop remains a cornerstone in most photographers' workflow, it was arguably the advent of raw conversion utilities and their ease of use that finally democratised digital photography.

It's interesting then that Pixmantec, the company behind a once-popular and capable raw converter, is behind a new grading plug-in for Apple's pro-video-editing software. Pixmantec, you

may recall, sold its technology assets in the Raw Shooter workflow solution to Adobe prior to the release of Lightroom. Then in 2009 Pixmantec changed its name to Irudis, and Tonalizer VFX is the first utility under the new name.

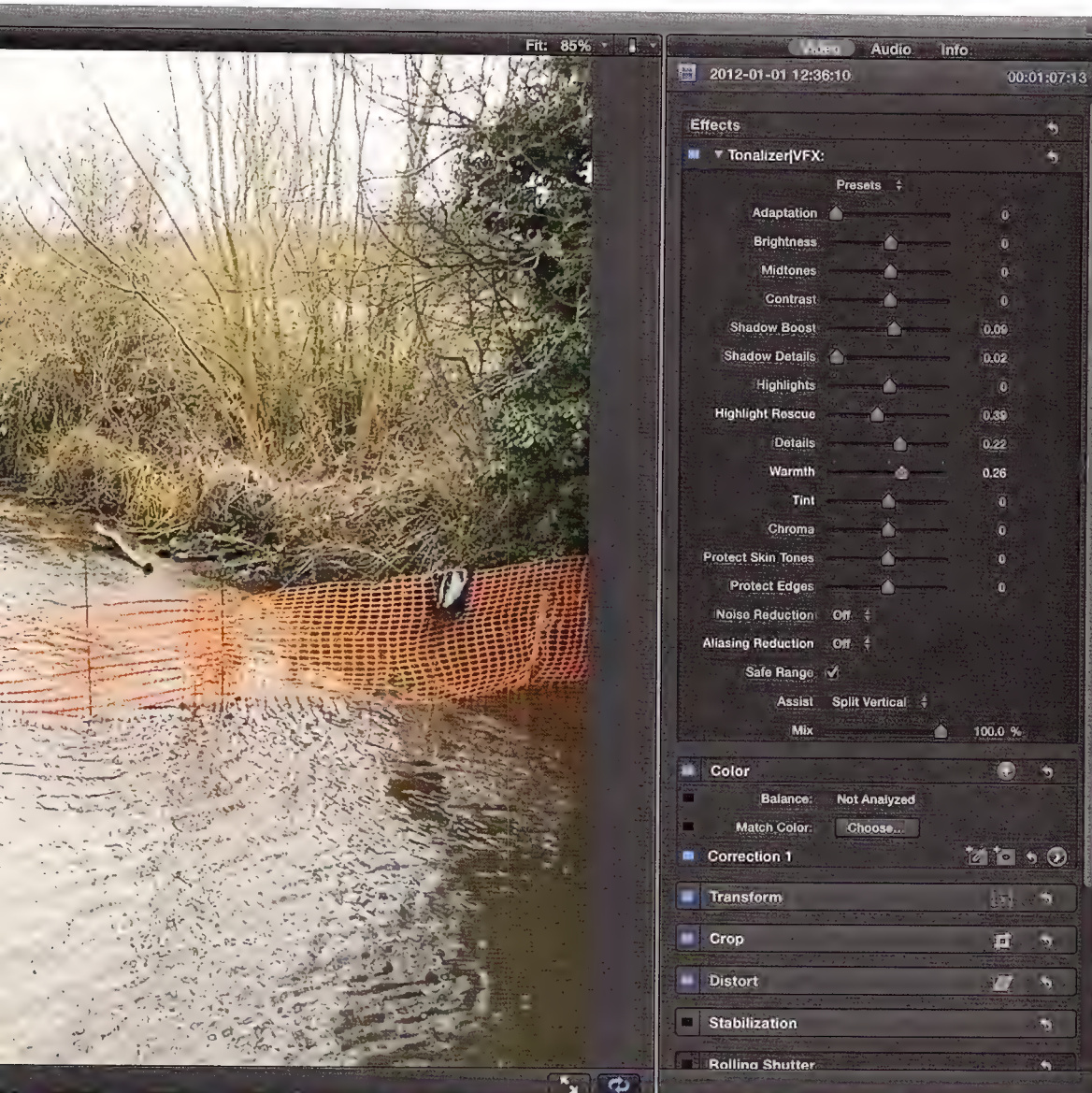
This new plug-in aims to simplify the fine-tuning and enhancement process in much the same way as a raw converter for still images. When it comes to eliminating bottlenecks, a photographic-style plug-in such as this for use with DSLR-based productions would be highly prized.

A video editor is still required as a host, however, and for the time being, the new plug-in is compatible with Apple's Final Cut Pro X, but also versions 7, Express and Motion 4 and 5. The company is looking at adding compatibility with Adobe Premiere Pro, and has hinted that software with similar functionality will be made available

for other video editors, perhaps including Avid Media Composer and Sony Vegas Pro.

Offering no way to upgrade from version 7 while at the same discarding compatibility with previous projects and more besides with version 10 (X), Apple has been widely criticised for its re-invention of Final Cut Pro. But while some broadcast pros might feel hesitant about adopting X, make no mistake that it is a pro-level editor and an excellent choice for DSLR-based footage. Apple dramatically changed colour correction in X, dropping the node-based tools and interface of the Color tool set, and fully integrating the utility in the latest release. Version X's Color Board is more intuitive and easier to use than previous tools, but of the controls for Color, Saturation and Exposure, adjusting the hugely powerful Color option is the most difficult to master quickly.





## Present and correct

Tonalizer VFX enables quick and accurate corrections, mostly using adjustment sliders, and adds some features not already found on FCP X, such as noise reduction and highlight recovery. As a plug-in, VFX installs under the Video & Audio effects browser and, like the other effects filters that reside there as thumbnails, needs only to be double-clicked or dragged-and-dropped onto the clip (or multiple clips) in the timeline to activate it. At the same time the controls are loaded into the Inspector.

There are 15 adjustment sliders and a further five options with either checkboxes or dropdown menu selections. Although the adjustment sliders are self-explanatory, there's quite a lot going on in the background – the operations are colour preserving while the algorithms take into account the amount of compression

in an attempt to reduce the appearance of artefacts, namely posterisation and noise. The correction process is iterative, and each control is arranged in a logical and operational order, not unlike a typical raw converter. Naturally, you're not expected to use every option for every clip, it depends on the tasks in hand and the issues that need correcting. This organisational structure is key to the usability and offers some speed gains in terms of workflow.

It's worth noting that each time Tonalizer is added to a clip the adjustments are reset, which is logical, but if you need to duplicate the settings for additional clips shot under identical conditions there's an option that allows you to save them as a preset. With a bit of practice, this can also be used to deliver consistent looks as the plug-in can be loaded or "stacked" several times if need be.

## Gain control

Of all the controls, Irudis recommends that the first slider, labelled Adaptation, should only be used when really necessary. It's the only control I thought to be vaguely ambiguous, requiring a bit of research as to its function from the supplied PDF instruction manual. The control is meant for improving or offsetting flat, low-contrast scenes shot under hazy or foggy conditions – for some of the footage I tested using an un-hacked Panasonic GH2 and it's ideal for most UK winter mornings.

As for the other sliders – Brightness, Midtones, Contrast, Shadow Boost – their use is intuitive with the results seen, naturally, in real time on screen. This range of adjustment is well within Final Cut Pro X's native settings, albeit more organised with Tonalizer. However, the Brightness slider works slightly differently

to lift the tonal values without normally having to tweak Gamma, though a slider for that is located lower down the control set.

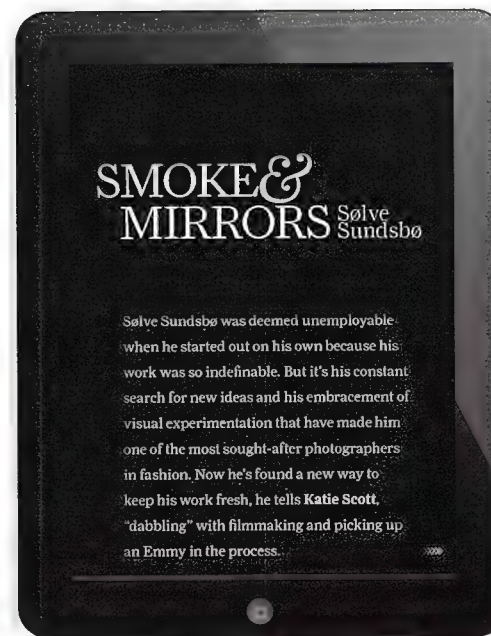
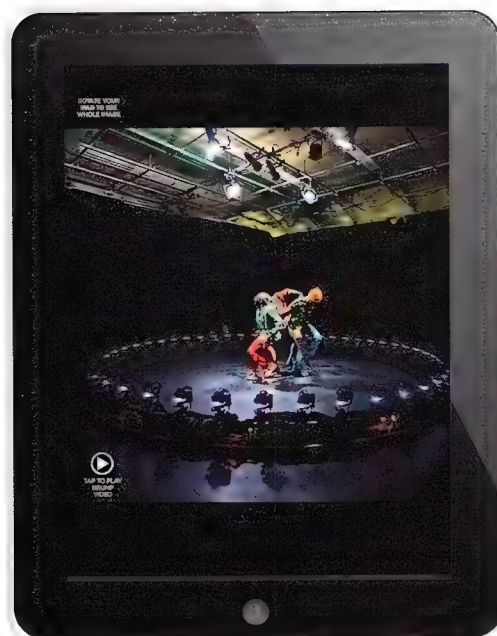
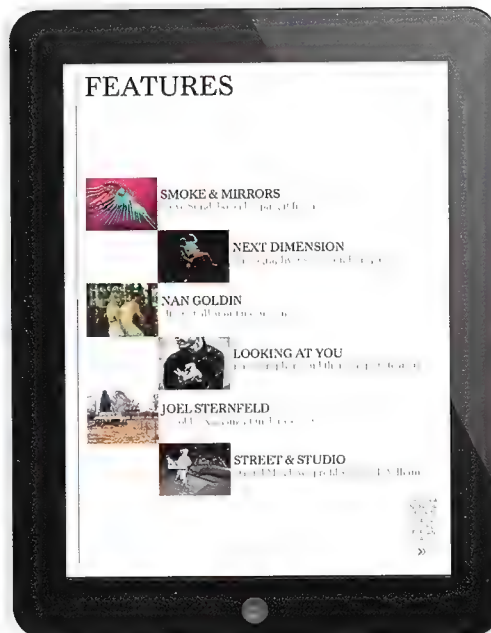
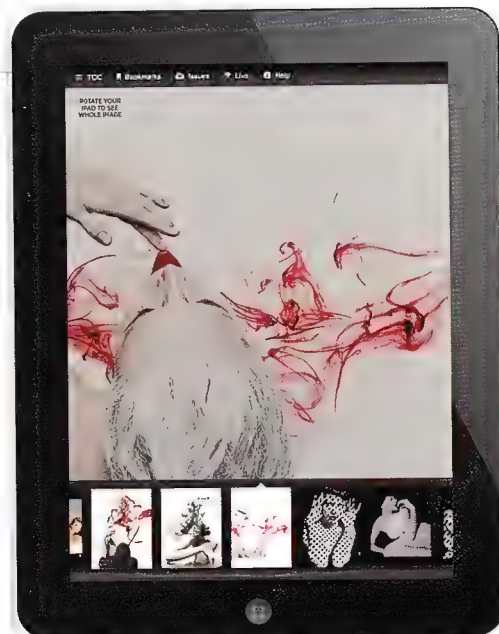
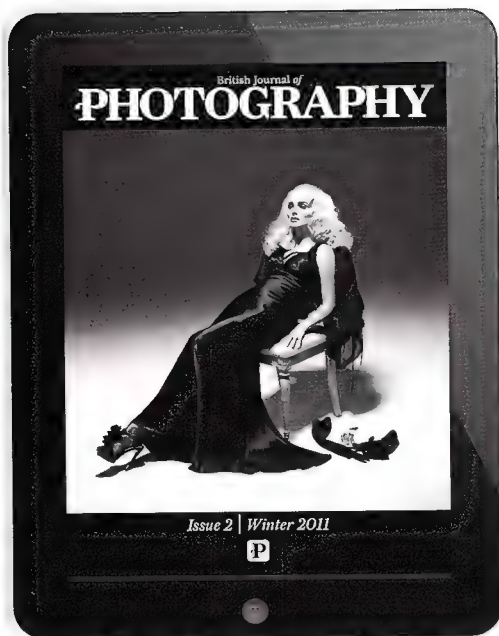
Not found in Final Cut Pro X is a Shadow Details slider. Used in conjunction with the Shadow Boost control, this is bound to be a popular adjustment for lifting the definition of the deep shadows that routinely suffer as a result of the in-camera compression routine. Noise can be a problem, but Tonalizer has a Noise-Reduction feature as a dropdown menu with four options – off, low, medium, and high – not a slider. This is meant for static shots but it can be valuable at other times, even if it can be tricky to assess on screen. Noise reduction is subtle and, of course, the trade off with detail softening is the same with stills, but it remains a persuasive feature of Tonalizer.

As mentioned previously, Tonalizer is optimised for GPU code, unlike some rivals that act as mere motion templates using Motion API. But, even with my high-end Mac running with a local RAID, I noticed some dropped frames on occasion, which hadn't happened before the use of this plug-in. In fairness, I had other utilities (Safari and Mail) vying for resources at the time, and when closed, no such problems were encountered. Final Cut Pro X's native Color controls, especially the localised correction features, are more versatile than that on offer with this plug-in, although for the majority of clips Tonalizer is likely to be sufficient for colour correction.

Nevertheless, it's the Highlight Rescue tool that's the headline feature for me. It's amazingly powerful, producing for the most part convincing-looking tones from washed-out-looking clips. Although keeping highlights under control is something every photographer will be painfully aware of, as novice videographers it's something that's difficult to deal with while acquiring their new skill set. This feature is worthy of the cost of admission by itself, although the price, currently \$179 (around £116), quite high for a plug-in, may mean some occasional users may hesitate to invest. That said, after the savings made from the competitively priced Final Cut Pro X, it makes Tonalizer VFX all the more compelling. *BJP*

www.irudis.com







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# The Studio Issue

Lucas Blalock's *Towards A Warm Math* was a hit photobook of 2011. Featuring highly coloured, esoteric still lifes that use mirrors, Photoshop and layers to fool the eye, it's one of a new wave of still-life series bending the boundaries of the medium. Why are young photographers interested in still life and what does their use of it say about their approach to photography? Diane Smyth investigates.

Plus we talk to fashion legend Paolo Roversi ahead of his first major London show in 18 years.

On sale 07 March



**Geo has become a hot ticket** for photographers – while s[edition] is offering artists a way to transcend the physical. Plus cloud storage options for photographers.

PROFILE

## Geo politics

**Geo magazine** has developed a reputation for publishing ambitious photo reportage across its 20 international titles and editions. Olivier Laurent asks director of photography Ruth Eichhorn what she looks for when commissioning photographers.

*Geo* first emerged in Germany in 1976 but it is now the centre of an empire composed of five editions in that country alone plus 20 versions in countries as diverse as India, Italy, France, Latvia, Korea and the US. The magazine's slogan is "A new world: the earth" and over the last few years it has interpreted that strapline as an opportunity to publish ambitious photo reportage. *Geo Germany's* director of photography Ruth Eichhorn, a regular on the World Press Photo jury, has become a sought-after personality at photofestivals, where photographers will queue for hours to show her their work.

Eichhorn discovered her love of photography at six, when she caused chaos in the streets of Hamburg. "When I was a little girl my parents liked to take me to town," she says. "My absolute favourite store was Foto-Köhler – I could spend hours in front of the shop window admiring the photographs. One day, when I was only six, I was strolling with my parents on the other side of the street when I saw new wedding pictures in the window. Without warning, I tore my hands from my mother's and father's and ran across the street, cars screeching, drivers slamming on their brakes, cursing. I was oblivious to the chaos, because I was admiring the new photo displays. That was the

beginning of a love story."

Eichhorn joined *Geo* in 1980 as a "girl Friday," as she puts it, or personal assistant to the magazine's art director. "This was the most wonderful job for the most wonderful magazine I could imagine," she tells *BJP*. Officially she was tasked with helping translate the magazine into French – "*Geo* was establishing, from Hamburg, its first foreign issue in French," but she was also asked to deal with photography. "Before that, I had no idea what a photo editor was."

She soon got the hang of it, and left the title to work as a photo editor on a series of titles. But by 1988, Eichhorn was back and working as a photo editor in *Geo's* New York office. In 1994, she was promoted to director of photography.

*Geo* is a media empire, publishing *Geo Saison*, *Geo Special*, *Geo Wissen*, *Geo Kompakt*, *Geo Epoche* and *Geolin* in Germany alone. The group puts out 11 different magazines from Hamburg, and "if you include the photo editor for the international issue, we

have 18 photo editors working here." The group also employs a secretary, "who remembers everything", and one person whose sole responsibility is to check the quality of the image files and to make sure they have not been manipulated. "We call it our

'pixel forensic department'."

### Aesthetic standards

*Geo* has a very high number of subscribers, who are often also collectors, and that means that "the magazine's strength lays in its

serenity", as Eichhorn puts it. "Its purpose in life is to satisfy aesthetic standards," she says. "It doesn't need to cause a commotion. Over the years, we have published a huge amount of stories, and we try not to repeat stories because our readers have very good memories. We once mistakenly reprinted the same photograph in an issue of *Geolino* – our children's magazine – three years later and one reader noticed it and wrote to us."

That means it's not easy for a photographer to propose a new story, "but it is not hopeless". Eichhorn says it doesn't matter whether the idea for a story comes from a freelance photographer or a staffer working on the magazine, but admits that many of the ideas do come from outside. "They are the ones out there," she explains. "They experience and see what is going on in the world. They are a big source of inspiration for us."

If the story doesn't come from the magazine's photo department, Eichhorn's editors will weigh it up and try "to pick very carefully the best photographer for the job. It can be a natural choice – somebody on





location or somebody who has done a similar job successfully – or an odd one, a daring experiment with a new photographer that we trust.”

Eichhorn receives “a lot of proposals every single day”, and says it’s impossible for her department to respond to all of them. But she looks at everything and if she likes a photographer’s style, will remember their name for the future. “There are fantastic ideas and the quality and variety and the originality is absolutely breathtaking and it is constantly improving.”

Geo also looks at what the agencies are doing. “We receive topic lists with ‘new arrivals’ from the agencies, as well as individual mails with ready-to-publish stories,” she says. “Some photographers even come to Hamburg to see us, and of course we meet them at festivals around the world.”

Eichhorn draws her knowledge of the field via the many competitions that she has been asked to judge in the past decade, too. “It gives you an incredible overview of who the top photographers are, their projects, their style, personalities and skills, which is very important for Geo,” she says. “When we assign a photographer, we prefer to know him or her personally – when they are out there in the field, they are kind of an ambassador for us. We want to make sure the person is serious in his or her research, and friendly and considerate.”

Geo mostly works with experienced photographers, “mainly because they know what kind of photography we are looking for”, but is also keen to work with emerging talents, who help keep the magazines fresh. “It is amazing how many young and talented photographers are out there, coming up with new concepts of telling a story,” she says.

“We’re also very lucky to be able to work with people from all over the world, while our editorial department is limited to writers speaking the magazine’s language.” In fact, when Geo buys an already-shot reportage, the magazine will still send the photographer back, “not so much to take more images, but to introduce the magazine’s writer to the story and its actors”.



### Picture processing

Editing stories is a collaborative act between the magazine and the photographer. The picture editors discuss the focus of the story before sending the photographer but very rarely afterwards, asking him or her to come back with an edit of 80-100 images plus the B-edit. The magazine makes the selection, but Eichhorn and her team will always send the layout to the photographer. “He or she can correct it or propose alternatives,” she says. “We try to listen when it makes sense.”

The magazine’s commissions have become highly sought-after, which Eichhorn puts down to its respect for photographers and their work, but she adds that there are strict rules too. “We have in

our contract a clause that the photographer is not supposed to talk about the topic to any other media when he or she is on assignment,” she tells *BJP*. Like many other international titles, reports published in the magazine are under embargo for months at a time, preventing photographers from selling them to other organisations as they are rolled out across Geo’s titles and websites.

After three decades with Geo, Eichhorn enjoys the job as much as ever. “Very few photographers we have commissioned have been a disappointment; most of them were inspiring and ambitious,” she says. “It’s a lifelong love affair for me.” *BJP*

[www.geo.de](http://www.geo.de)

Geo’s subscribers are also collectors with a clear memory of which images made it into the magazine, forcing its photo editors to constantly seek new talents.

### OPINION

## Protect & Survive

Cloud storage promises the answer to the question every pro photographer has been asking since digital went mainstream – how best to protect valuable image archives? But, finds Anthony Dhanendran, it’s best thought of as part of a wider backup strategy that includes solutions based on terra firma.

When I tell other photographers about my backup system, they seem to think I’m pulling their leg,” says William Sawalich, because for every image he imports into his computer, the St Louis-based photographer keeps duplicates on internal and external hard disks, and every month he backs them up to an external disk and to Blu-ray disc. “I can back up 50-100GB of data in a matter of a few hours every month, and it feels worth it.”

Sawalich doesn’t just rely on drives, however – there’s a backup in “the cloud” as well. “I rent space on Amazon’s unused servers,” he explains. “I’ve incorporated it into my file delivery workflow: when I send files to my client, I also send them to the cloud.”



### 3-2-1 backup

Some photographers find it hard to see their archives as mere "data", but that's what it is, and it's just as important to keep that data safe as it is to secure an archive of negatives or slides. In a recent *BJP* survey, more than half of respondents said their archives were sized between 500GB and two terabytes (TB), and half said they backed up their archive at least once a week. However, three in 10 said they had lost valuable data as a result of not backing up, and two in 10 now backed up regularly because of a prior data loss.

The American Society of Media Photographers publishes a digital photography best-practice guide (see [www.bit.ly/dpbest](http://www.bit.ly/dpbest) for a PDF download), which advocates what it calls a "3-2-1 backup" of three copies, on two different media, with one stored off-site. Most photographers probably have at least one backup on the go, and while making three might seem a chore, it's better than losing the lot.

Cloud storage may be a good replacement for one of those backups, but it's not a simple decision to make. The two chief concerns are cost (online storage costs in the order of 10 times as much, per year, as hard disks) and time – photographers with very large archives could find themselves waiting days or even weeks for the uploading process to finish.

Hard disks are the most common backup media and, while they are generally reliable they do fail, which is why it's important to keep those second and third copies.

### Nebulous future

It's not easy to exactly define what constitutes cloud storage, but it refers to the nebulous "cloud" of various servers on the internet. It could be as simple as uploading images to a Flickr Pro account, but many are put off by the control Flickr has over its users, being able to delete accounts without warning for violations of the site's rules. At the other end of the scale is an Amazon-based setup such as Sawalich's, in which users rent space on the shopping giant's servers, but which requires a fair amount of tech-savvy.

He says that he turned to the cloud after becoming frustrated with hard disks that kept failing. "I've had an almost 100 percent

failure rate with consumer-class external hard drives," he says. "I'm fortunate that I haven't lost photographs or revenue because of it. I've always used a dual backup system so that when those drives failed I had the data duplicated on optical media. At one time in the early 2000s that was CDs, then DVDs and now it's Blu-ray discs."

For him, the cloud is cheap ("I think I pay something like a tenth of a penny per gigabyte per month"), but it has other advantages too. "I've got another layer of protection for my selects and the files that clients have already demonstrated have the most value," he explains. "Plus, as an added benefit, any of my files in the cloud have an associated URL that I can link directly to. So when a client calls up to say 'I can't find that file you sent last year,' I can very easily find the file and right-click to get a link that I can email to them immediately."

### What's available?

Some cloud services are tailored to photographers' needs. The most popular is the US-based Photoshelter ([www.photoshelter.com](http://www.photoshelter.com)), which charges between \$110 and \$600 a year for 10GB to 1000GB of online storage, along with a web interface. The latter not only allows photographers to access their archives more easily, it allows them to sell images directly. That's what attracted Chris Ridley

([www.chrisridley.photoshelter.com](http://www.chrisridley.photoshelter.com)) to the service. He puts his "picks" on Photoshelter but uses two separate disk-based backups for the rest of his 2TB working collection. On Ridley's site, users can buy a print or a rights-managed licensed download, or download a free low-resolution version. The company takes care of the e-commerce, printing and licensing, or photographers can opt to fulfil orders themselves. And, unlike Flickr, Photoshelter will accept PSD and raw images and has no file-size limits (Flickr reduces images larger than 20MB).

It has plug-ins for Lightroom and Aperture so it can be integrated into your workflow, as does Mosaic ([www.mosaicarchive.com](http://www.mosaicarchive.com)), which charges between \$140 and \$900 per year for 250GB to 2TB of space (pricing is available for larger archives). Mosaic has no e-commerce facility and its creators say that rather than being a backup it's designed to replace the local storage on your computer. It integrates tightly with Lightroom so that images are seamlessly transferred between the home or office computer and its servers. It's currently only available for Macs (the company says a Windows version is coming soon).

Both Mosaic and Photoshelter were started by photographers, so both say they cater to the needs of the profession in ways that other

services don't. However, those other services can be much cheaper, especially for smaller archives.

Companies such as Strato ([www.free-hidrive.com](http://www.free-hidrive.com)), Wuala ([www.wuala.com](http://www.wuala.com)) and Carbonite ([www.carbonite.com](http://www.carbonite.com)) all offer simple file backup, the latter providing the cheapest solution at £42 a year for "unlimited" backup. Wuala charges €59 a year for 50GB, but larger capacities can become expensive. Strato's 500GB product costs £300 a year, and Wuala's is €399.

Perhaps more problematically, the backup services are just that – you get a copy of your files online, but no ability to easily share or catalogue images – or sell them. Some, such as Strato, integrate with Windows or Mac OS, so Lightroom, Aperture and other programs see them as normal disks, which makes things easier, but they're not designed for workflows.

Both Wuala and Dropbox ([www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)) offer 2GB of free storage but that amount isn't much use for image archives. Besides using it as a sharing tool, as many photographers already do, it may also prove a useful way to keep regular backups of invoices and working documents, which don't take up anything like as much disk space as images. Dropbox in particular will synchronise documents as soon as they are saved and offers good tools for accessing files from phones and other devices.



Strato runs huge data centres, allowing users to store their work in "the cloud".



All those services are well known and widely used, and all claim they have the appropriate security measures in place to protect your data from hackers or anyone else.

### Seeding time

The big problem with cloud-based storage is the time it takes to get the files on there in the first place. Most people in Britain on ADSL broadband connections will have an upload speed of, at most, 500Kbits/sec (the upload speed is always much lower than the line's download speed, the "headline figure" ISPs quote), which equates to 3.7MB per minute or 5.1GB a day. It would take 10 days of nothing but uploading, then, to make full use of a 50GB storage quota.

But for Sawalich, the time isn't a problem. "The slow upload speed is by far outweighed by the benefits. It's an action that's running in the background, so it's not as if I'm occupied for the duration of the upload."

Both Photoshelter and Mosaic allow users to post a disk to them, for which Photoshelter charges \$100 and Mosaic a fixed fee per 1GB of data on the disk, which is higher for users outside the US than for Americans. This kind of "seeding" is much less common with the backup services, although Strato does offer it. Usefully, Mosaic will also post your photos back to you on a disk should you cancel your subscription.

The cheapest way to store data online is through Amazon's S3 (Simple Storage Service), but that can be outweighed by its technical complexity ([aws.amazon.com/s3](http://aws.amazon.com/s3)). It's designed for programmers and developers, so for people who don't have experience – or know someone who does – in that area, it can be daunting.

### What's the answer?

Cloud storage isn't necessarily cheap, quick, or easy to use, but it's still important to have backups. It's not a good idea to rely on CDs or DVDs, which have very high failure rates, so local backup hard disks are still the best option – although it's important to check them every few months and replace the physical disks regularly. One way around disk failures is a multi-disk system such as those from Drobo ([www.drobo.com](http://www.drobo.com)) that warn when disks

are nearing failure, allowing them to be quickly replaced.

For people with even moderate archives or working collections, or those shooting video, it's simply not viable to store everything online, which is why many professionals who have made the switch – including the two we talked to – and use the cloud mainly for select images that are likely to be more valuable, with the rest of the collection stored locally on hard disks.

The cloud has the advantage of being off-site, providing another layer of protection against fire, theft and disaster, which is another point in favour of storing at least the most important images online in addition to the local backup.

As Ridley says, "There's no excuse these days, if people value their files. At the end of the day it really doesn't cost a lot to have a good backup system." *BJP*

### REPORT

## Digital collectors

**S[edition] aims to completely digitise the art buying, collecting, trading and even making world, by making it possible to trade digital artworks. Joanna Cresswell speaks with co-founders Robert Norton and Harry Blain.**

Collecting art was once an exclusive activity reserved for the wealthy and connected. Now owning an iconic Wim Wenders' shop front photograph, an extract of a Bill Viola video piece or an augmented version of Damien Hirst's diamond-encrusted skull is within reach.

Launched late last year exclusively for the digital realm, s[edition] is an online art emporium showcasing the newest in intellectual property and ecommerce, and offering

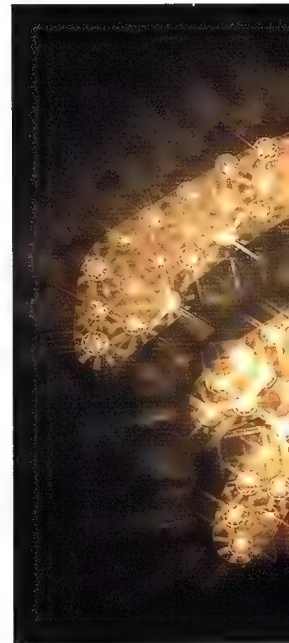
everybody the chance to own high-end, big-name artworks at a fraction of the usual price. The project is the brainchild of Robert Norton, former CEO of Saatchi Online, and Harry Blain, director of Haunch of Venison, and it aims to completely digitise the art buying, collecting and making experience.

The company's portfolio features "affordable digital artworks" by some of the world's leading contemporary artists, which can be calibrated to iPads, mobile phones and television screens; further apps for the Android and Windows Phone platform are in development. Once purchased, artworks become part of the buyer's collection and can be stored in a vault, made possible using cloud storage, and there's just one rule – printing is forbidden. "S[edition] allows you to enjoy your art in digital format and no other," reads the website.



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- 1 *Burning Flower* digital limited edition © Mat Collishaw.
- 2 *Forever* digital limited edition © Tim Noble and Sue Webster.
- 3 *Entrance* digital limited edition © Wim Wenders.
- 4 *Lounge Painting 1* digital limited edition © Wim Wenders.
- 5 *Whispering Weeds* digital limited edition © Mat Collishaw. All images courtesy of [www.seditionart.com](http://www.seditionart.com).



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3



**Affordable art**

"The aim of s[edition] is to make contemporary art available to a global audience at affordable prices, so it can be enjoyed by a new generation of art lovers," Robert Norton tells *BJP*. For as little as £5 anybody can own an original artwork; a spinning, alternative version of Damien Hirst's skull is the most expensive artwork available, but at £500 it's still a fraction of the price of the original. Tracy Emin, whose prints are said to be worth around £250,000, says that "the idea of original pieces of art going to people directly for a low price" is very promising.

The founders hope the approach will create more self-styled modern art collectors than ever more, and Norton argues that the works available on s[edition] are the 21st-century equivalent of traditional woodcuts and etchings. "This is just a natural evolution of the print," he

says. "[But] in no way do we think the digital limited editions dilute the value of physical artworks."

Mat Collishaw, whose *Burning Flowers* piece is the best-selling artwork on the site, believes this evolution could also be liberating for artists, offering them the chance to create a new genre of artworks unconstrained by form or weight. "It has that beautiful quality to it, which is beyond what print can reproduce," he says. "You do not have a problem with the material substance or its weight and gravity. It is frictionless when it is in the digital realm. So you can make a work that has a more chimerical, spectral quality to it, which is something that I aspire to."

In fact the most successful artworks on the site are the ones that engage with the medium, rather than simply reconfiguring existing 'flat' pieces to fit the format. The only exception to this rule is

lens-based artwork, which could be good news for photographers and video artists. Wim Wenders and Bill Viola have already got involved, and it's interesting to speculate on who might be next. Norton didn't give anything away, but stated that s[edition] is "definitely interested in those photographers who are adding to the contemporary art culture on a global level".

**Digital reproduction**

As with other media innovations, digital artworks raise questions over reproduction and authenticity; for artists and theorists this could prove a ripe area for exploration, but for s[edition] it's a problem that they're taking very seriously. Upon purchase, each artwork is registered to a collector's account and a central records database, and pieces can be traced through digital watermarks. S[edition] is planning to open a marketplace, however,

which will allow digital art owners to sell or exchange sold-out works.

Blain and Norton believe the project is a "natural evolution" for the art world, and offers it an opportunity to grow and transform itself. "We're looking at interactivity and personalisation, and are always open to ways artists wish to explore the full potential of the digital medium," says Blain. The signs are they are already getting to work, with Emin describing digital art as "a new medium" and talking about making new art works using her handwriting.

"At present, the artworks available on s[edition] generally reference physical forms and have been re-created as digital artworks," says Norton. "But it is our intention to showcase original works that have been made by artists specifically for s[edition]." *BJP*

[www.seditionart.com](http://www.seditionart.com)



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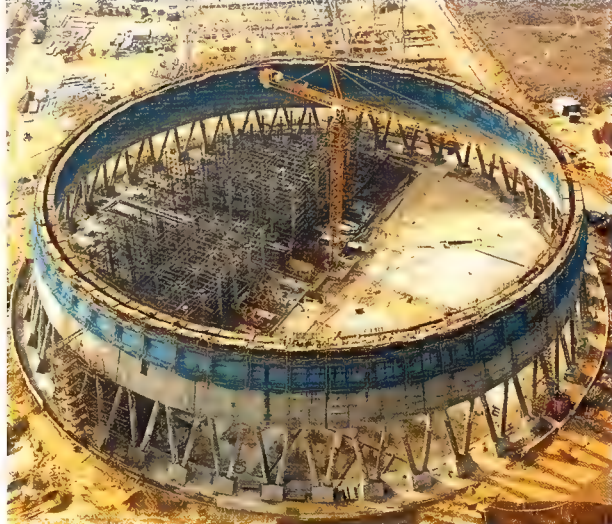
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SUBMITTING COMMISSIONS

Five photographers find creative freedom on corporate assignments\* Martin Parr turns community artist

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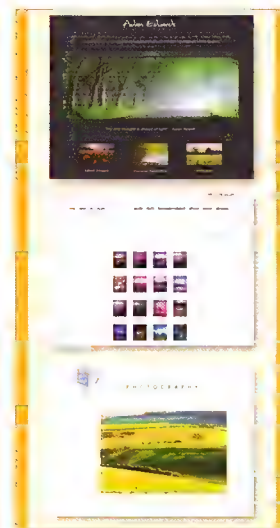
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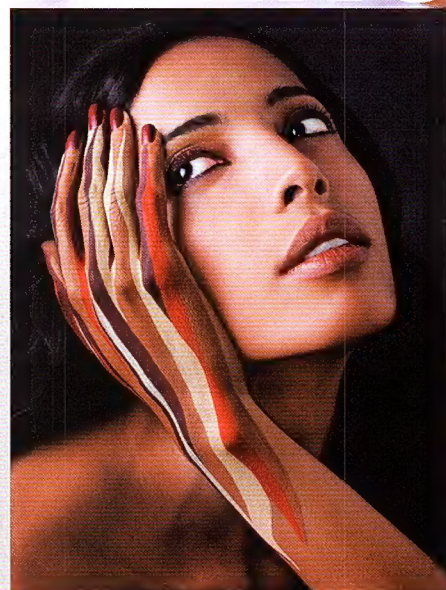
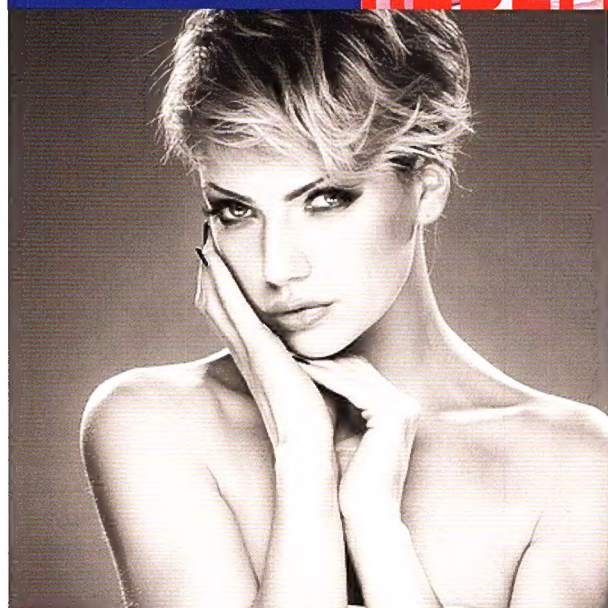
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**Hollywood** creates great stories but there's no greater fiction than its star production, finds Diane Smyth, as is revealed by an intriguing exhibition at the Open Eye Gallery.



Marlene Dietrich,  
from the private  
collection of  
Martin Parr.

This month's issue of *BJP* looks at storytelling, and there's none more famous than Hollywood. Its films are watched all over the world and have become part of our collective culture, and on 26 February they'll make up the majority of the films celebrated at the Oscars. But if Hollywood excels at cinematic fiction, it's even better at manufacturing stars. Marlene Dietrich, depicted in this image, personified the femme fatale, but her personal life was hidden behind her celebrity. As she grew older, body-shaping underwear, non-surgical facelifts and clever lighting kept up the glamorous illusion.

*Painted Photographs*, an exhibition at Open Eye in Liverpool until 18 March, gives an insight into how these fictions were kept up in photography and the media. Including 20 images from Martin Parr's private collection, it shows how stars were presented in press stills – and how newspapers retouched those shots. The stars are isolated from their surroundings, with their companions and sometimes even their bodies cut out of the photograph as the picture editors hone in on their celebrity. "They're very surreal, that's what makes

them so interesting," says Parr. "But I don't have any academic theories about them, I just like them. My collecting is very intuitive."

Parr's photographic collection famously includes vernacular items such as postcards and watches, and some of his *Painted Pictures* were included in his *Parrworld* show, which was exhibited at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in the UK and at the Jeu de Paume in Paris. The *Painted Pictures* on show at Open Eye have never been exhibited before, though, and include icons such as Marilyn Monroe, James Dean and John Lennon. Parr has been collecting these pictures for a decade and now has more than 100; most of his collection comes from the US and the golden-age glamour of the 1960s and '70s. "The earliest examples come from the 1920s, but this is really the heyday," he says. "There are a few from the 1980s, but when you get to the 1990s, it suddenly stops because it's all done digitally now." *BJP*

*Painted Photographs* is on show until 18 March at the Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool. [www.openeye.org.uk](http://www.openeye.org.uk)



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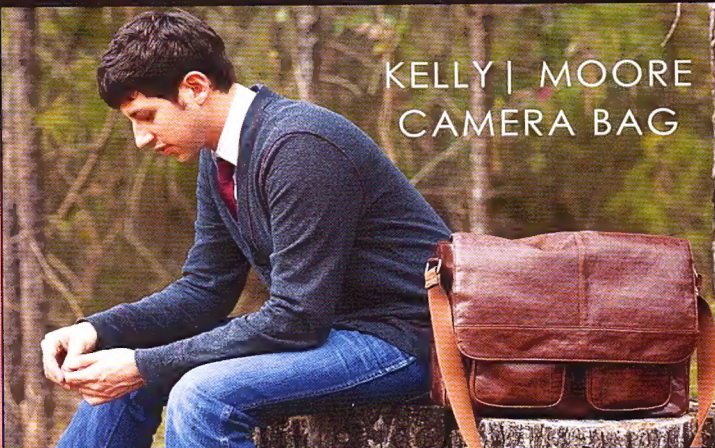
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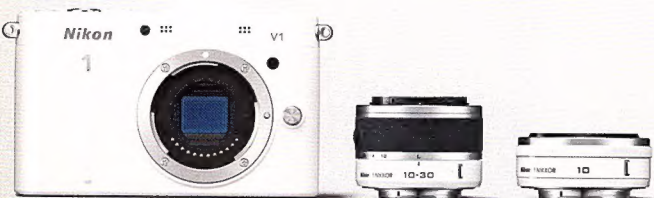
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